DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 449 450 CG 030 707

AUTHOR	Sandhu, Daya Singh, Ed.
TITLE	Elementary School Counseling in the New Millennium.
INSTITUTION	American Counseling Association, Alexandria, VA.
ISBN	ISBN-1-55620-182-6
PUB DATE	2001-00-00
NOTE	308p.
AVAILABLE FROM	American Counseling Association, 5999 Stevenson Ave., Alexandria, VA 22304-3300 (Order No. 72700). Tel: 800-347-6647 ext. 222 (Toll Free).
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Childhood Needs; Counselor Role; Cultural Influences; Diversity (Student); Elementary Education; Elementary School Students; Elementary Schools; Prosocial Behavior; *School Counselors; *Special Needs Students; Student Responsibility

ABSTRACT

Counselors must consider social change as they design programs to maximize student potential, personal growth, self-determination, and self-responsibility. There is also a need for counselors to develop, implement, and evaluate counseling programs for culturally diverse students. The book is intended as a textbook for courses in elementary school guidance and counseling programs, focusing mainly on issues pertaining to special needs students. Section 1, "Proactive Counseling in the 21st Century," introduces challenges for elementary school counselors; presents a proactive model of counseling; and provides ethical guidelines. Section 2, "Developmental Needs of Elementary School Students," considers the interrelationship of multiple factors in a child's development; looks at the role of play therapy; and discusses strategies to foster prosocial behaviors. Section 3, "Crisis/Intervention," addresses the topics of crisis and intervention strategies, including systemic intervention; holistic solution-focused strategies; the specifics of school counseling; and the issues relating to children of alcoholics. Section 4, "Special Needs/Concerns," addresses demands for program and services for special needs, multiracial, and immigrant children. Section 5, "Technology and Other Resources for the Elementary School Counselor," introduces counselors to technological competence, and provides recommendations for a collection of materials for their own professional library. (Contains over 300 references.) (JDM)

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Elementary School Counseling
in the New Millennium

Edited by

Daya Singh Sandhu, EdD

American Counseling Association
Alexandria, VA

Elementary School Counseling in the New Millennium

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10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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Alexandria, VA 22304

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Elementary school counseling in the new millennium / edited by Daya Singh Sandhu.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 1-55620-182-6 (alk. paper)
1. Counseling in elementary education. 2. Elementary school counselors.
I. Sandhu, Daya Singh, 1943–

LB1027.5 .E37 2001
372.14—dc21 00-052584

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to elementary school children of the new millennium, who are the hope, promise, and future of our great nation and the brave new world. This book is also dedicated to my nephew, Gursharan (Yash) Singh Sandhu, who is an elementary school student.

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FOREWORD

Bursting into the scene less than three decades ago, elementary school counselors are still relatively new to the field of education. Most early guidance specialists in the schools tended to be psychologists, social workers, attendance officers, or high school counselors. Inspired by the desire to lay the foundation for a better society and to help children realize more of their potential, the developmental guidance and counseling model emerged. It was viewed as a way of preventing problems from happening.

Some traditionalists wondered what an elementary school counselor would do. Talking with children about career plans and college choices did not seem to fit. Many of the counseling models and procedures that worked well with adults and teenagers were not as suitable for young students. As time passed, it became apparent that helping children gain the most from school would become the measure of counselor effectiveness and value.

The primary goal for school counselors was seen as helping children learn more effectively and efficiently. The counselors were viewed as human behavior and relationship specialists. It made sense to identify the skills, behaviors, and experiences that students needed for academic achievement. A guidance curriculum that complemented the academic areas was created in most schools. The developmental guidance and counseling approach became the dominant model.

In such an approach, students learn about themselves and others. Instead of waiting for a problem to occur and then reacting to it, school counselors teach students to study typical problems and to examine interpersonal relationships. For example, a discussion of verbal and physical abuse might lead to ways of dealing with bullies.

Students of the new millennium have the world at their fingertips. For better and for worse, mass media such as television, the Internet, and movies affect the way children perceive and behave with others. The most pressing societal issues engulf children: school and community violence, cultural diversity, gender equity, economic disparities, and questions of sexual identity. The world of work and the way people communicate have been dramatically changed by computer technology. It has also opened new avenues for counseling young people.

Although the indirect procedures and processes of the developmental model are preferred, there are occasions when a student's personal or social problems need immediate attention. A family divorce, for instance, could make children feel abandoned, uncertain, or even guilty. They are likely to be confused and distracted, perhaps wondering what is to become of them. In a fit of anger, they might vent their frustrations on a teacher or another student and disrupt classroom learning.

Although the exact number is difficult to determine, one estimate is that close to 35 million children are children of alcoholics. These children may react in different ways; some may choose to withdraw whereas others may be aggressive and hostile. Almost always the counseling process involves increasing awareness, recognizing self-worth, and learning coping skills.

Some students experience home environments that are neither nurturing nor supportive. Certain cases are very worrisome and heartbreaking to counselors who want to take action but may be uncertain about what to do. When children experience personal crises, counselors must be ready to help with timely interventions.

As the counselor position in elementary schools has become established, there has been less concern about *why* counselors should be employed and more questions about *how* they function in their jobs. Given the limited number of counselors available, how do they provide a developmental program and respond to student crises?

The school counselor's work can be organized around six basic interventions: individual counseling; small-group counseling; classroom or large-group guidance; peer facilitator training and coordination; consultation with parents, teachers, and community resources; and the coordination of a school's guidance program. These interventions can focus on developmental guidance activities or pressing conflicts.

There are not enough counselors in a school to provide every student the luxury of individual counseling. Likewise, there are too many students to be seen in small groups. It is essential that counselors draw upon all school personnel and as many community resources as possible.

Elementary school counselors are not therapists. Typically there is only one or two counselors in a school, and the ratio to students is high. Access to students and the amount of time that can be spent with them are often limited. Therefore, the counselor's role favors brief counseling, working with small and large groups, and mobilizing resources within a school and community. Counseling priorities and time management are based on student interests and needs, as well as the knowledge and skills that a counselor brings to a given situation.

For many years it was assumed that childhood was filled with carefree, playful times and that children enjoyed a worry-free life because there were so few responsibilities and demands. To the contrary, children face many formidable tasks and challenges. They need a friendly adult advocate, such as an elementary school counselor, who can provide timely developmental and crisis interventions.

Counselors and other educators of the 21st century can use this book to gain insights about child guidance and counseling. The contributing authors have targeted several student populations that need special attention by counselors. The book aims to answer the question: What is a counselor to do? The thoughtful and practical suggestions included in this book can provide some direction and help shape effective interventions.

Robert D. Myrick, PhD
Gainesville, Florida

PREFACE

The United States appears to be riding high on the cusp of the 21st century and the third millennium. But the rosy view of American prosperity at the top hides deep and dangerous moral, economic, age, and racial fault lines lurking beneath the surface (Wright-Edelman, 1998). Every day in the United States, 3,000 couples are divorced; 6 children commit suicide; 13 children are homicide victims; 280 children are arrested for violent crimes; 2,756 children drop out of school; 5,753 children are arrested; 8,470 children are reported abused or neglected; and 14.5 million children live in poverty (Wright-Edelman, 1998). The rate of confirmed child sexual abuse victims is escalating to more than 350,000 cases per year, and an argument can be made for the schools to begin school-based programs to meet the needs of these survivors (Beasley & Christenberry, 1991). With one in four Americans being a child, we can no longer choose to ignore these issues that place such tremendous stress on the children who attend our elementary schools. These issues set the stage for future problems if they are not dealt with by elementary school teachers and counselors.

The world continues to change at an ever increasing pace. These changes produce stress that can have a dramatic—and negative—effect on children and their families. Schools are constantly faced with the task of helping students respond to these changes, but parents and teachers often need help to deal with the problems their children and students face. Dunn (1990) cited studies by Gibson (1989), Jackson, Cleveland, and Maranda (1975), and Omizo, Hershberger, and Omizo (1988) as proof that early intervention with elementary school counselors can have positive results with elementary school students. Dean (1992) in her study among elementary school children showed that 72% of elementary school students indicated a need for personal counseling. "Our children are crying out for our help," she says (Dean, 1992, p. 8). And with the events in Littleton, Colorado, carved into our memories, can there be any doubt that our students are in need of professional help, at an earlier age than ever thought?

Elementary school counselors face changing demands. Increasingly, they need to help students adjust to the changes that students face in their lives. Dean (1992) asserted that schools must be involved in the areas of mental health and should take steps to ensure that students (and teachers) experience positive mental health. Nationally, suicide is the third leading cause of death among 15- to 24-year-olds, and, on average, 5 children ages 5 to 14 commit suicide every week. Furthermore, the

U.S. Department of Education in 1993 reported, "Suicide among American teenagers is increasing at an alarming yet underestimated rate" (Youth and Alcohol, Selected Reports to the Surgeon General, cited in Juhnke, 1996, p. 252). Other changes that are likely to face elementary school students in the next millennium include the following.

1. *A culturally diverse world.* The United States is increasingly multicultural, and children need to learn to appreciate and accept the diversity—racial, ethnic, gender, and sexual orientation—that surround them. In schools, "The development and maintenance of culturally compatible learning environments is pre-requisite to a truly multicultural school environment" (Herring, 1997, p. 197).
2. *Alcohol and drug abuse.* Studies show that students are experimenting with drugs and alcohol at an early age. As the effectiveness of programs such as Drug Abuse Resistance Education Program (DARE) are questioned, counselors will need to get involved with students whose lives are affected by alcohol and drugs.
3. *Technology.* Although many of the recent technological advances are touted as positive, the rapid change technology causes may produce anxiety and alienation because of the impersonal nature of technology.
4. *Changing world of work.* Counselors will be asked to provide career guidance for students who will face the various economic, political, and social changes that will affect the workplace. It is extremely important that future counselors understand "the relation of changing demographics to socioeconomic and psychoeducational imperative in schools" (Herring, 1997, p. xiv).
5. *Increased violence in society.* Tragic school shootings show just how dangerous our schools can be for the students. Counselors will need to help children respond to bullies and reach out to those who are seen as outsiders.
6. *Human relations.* Counselors who strive to improve children's interpersonal skills are helping to ensure that the next millennium will be one in which society will benefit from cooperation among its citizens (Gerler, 1991).
7. *Sexism and gender discrimination.* Both sexism and gender discrimination remain a significant problem in our elementary schools. "Strategies and solutions designed to produce gender equity in schools and colleges must involve changes in school cultures, climates, curricula, teaching methodologies, counseling and advising, and retraining of school and university personnel" (Funk, 1993, p. 12).

Today's elementary school students represent the future of U.S. society in the 21st century (Crabbs, 1989). This future is not guaranteed, however. Students in elementary schools are faced with ever increasing changes and stresses as they navigate their way toward graduation. Elementary school counselors need to play an ever increasing role in helping these students make it through successfully.

PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

The purpose of this book can be well described in Gilbert Wrenn's (1962) words,

> We must understand the new social forces that are influencing young people, as well as the rest of us—and we must learn to apply new psychological insights into the nature of the individual. . . . Counselors must anticipate social change, not necessarily its rate and magnitude, but at least its direction. (p. v)

This book aspires to make the elementary counselors aware about those new directions that will shape the destiny of our youths at the threshold of a new millennium. Counselors must consider social changes as they plan programs to maximize student potentials through their *personal growth, self-determination,* and *self-responsibility* (Baker, 1996; Gibson & Mitchell,1999; Gladding, 1998; Myrick, 1997).

In the contemporary American society, things are changing fast. Our elementary students are growing up in a very different society. They are now confronted by a host of opportunities, decisions, and conflicts that past generations have never known (Myrick, 1997). There is a need for school counselors to develop, implement, and evaluate counseling programs for culturally diverse student groups (Lee, 1995). It is important that counselors for the new millennium become *agents of social change* (Lee & Walz, 1998) who not only change the lives of their clients but also change the world around them. Prejudice reduction (Sandhu & Aspy, 1997), empowerment of women and girls (Aspy & Sandhu, 1999), violence (Goldstein & Conoley, 1997), and substance abuse and addictions (Ottomanelli, 1995; Pagliaro & Pagliaro, 1996) are some very challenging and real issues elementary counselors must address.

This book is intended as a textbook for courses in elementary school guidance and counseling programs. The issues pertaining to the special needs of the elementary students is the main focus of this book.

The book is divided into five sections. In each section, chapters on similar themes are grouped together. Section I, Proactive Counseling in the 21st Century, introduces challenges for elementary school counselors in the new millennium, and the two chapters that follow present a proactive model of counseling (chapter 1) and provide ethical guidelines to deal with the new challenges effectively (chapter 2).

Section II, Developmental Needs of Elementary School Students, has five chapters. Chapter 3 examines the interrelationships of physical, cognitive, and social changes in elementary children's development. In chapter 4, the author discusses the role of play therapy in dealing with developmental and emotional issues. Chapter 5 focuses on the use of creative arts to develop children's creative strategies through flexibility and intentionality. Chapter 6 discusses strategies to foster prosocial behavior in children through using group rewards. Chapter 7, the last chapter in this section, describes the changing nature of work in the new millennium and discusses appropriate career development strategies.

Section III, Crisis/Intervention, addresses the topics of crisis and intervention strategies. This section comprises six chapters. Chapter 8 proposes systemic interventions as a proactive step to promote optimal development of elementary students. In chapter 9, the author presents encouragement counseling as a holistic solution-focused intervention to help the discouraged child. A profile of a discouraged child is presented, and specific communication skills are described to redirect the discouraged child. In chapter 10, the authors discuss the 4C's of school counseling—consultation, curriculum, collaboration, and coordination—as intervention strategies to help children of the alcoholics (COAs). The authors also provide suggestions on how to address the personal–social needs of the COAs to prepare them to become better students and responsible adults. In chapter 11, the authors introduce issues relating to the children of divorce who suffered from years of socialization in dysfunctional families and parental conflicts. Primary prevention efforts are recommended as the most cost-effective method to educate children about divorce to reduce future social problems.

Chapter 12 focuses on boys who bully. Essential components of a schoolwide intervention program are described to help school counselors become effective catalysts in reducing bullying behavior. In the last chapter of this section, chapter 13, the author describes "peervention"—the use of peer facilitators—as a positive strategy to prevent violence in elementary schools. Through proper training and supervision, peer facilitators can be used to enable students to resolve their own conflicts and reduce violent incidents.

Section IV, Special Needs/Concerns, starts with chapter 14, which addresses the demands for programs and services for special needs students in the new millennium. The author asserts that all elementary school counselors must become aware of special education legislations and actively participate in the identification and program planning to meet the academic, emotional, social, and career needs of special students. In chapter 15, the authors discuss language-based problems of exceptional children. It is important that counselors working with children with learning disabilities must understand the manifestations of their language problems. In chapter 16, the author addresses the unique needs of multiracial children. Issues relating to identity development of the multiracial children are discussed. Counselors can play a pivotal role to help multiracial children appreciate their multicultural heritage and develop positive racial identities.

Chapter 17 presents profiles of immigrant children in schools. Various issues affecting children from immigrant families are also discussed. In chapter 18, the author examines literature on spirituality in the developmental context of children. Various implementation models and strategies are discussed that school counselors can use for the spiritual development and wellness of the students. Chapter 19 examines issues of sexuality as they relate to the concepts of gender and sexual orientation. Suggestions are made to promote tolerance for differences and expand understanding of gender issues. In chapter 20, the last chapter of this section, the authors examine the problems faced by gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered (GLBT) students in American schools. Legal responsibilities of the school, professional training issues, and the role of the counselors with GLBT students and their families are also discussed.

The final section of this book, Section V, Technology and Other Resources for the Elementary School Counselor, includes two chapters. Chapter 21 introduces school counselors to the 12 technological competencies for counselors as recommended by the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Technology Interest Network. The authors strongly recommend school counselors to become proficient in information technologies for both personal and professional reasons. And last, but not the least, in chapter 22, the author recommends a basic collection of materials for elementary school counselors for their own professional library. A variety of books, electronic materials, and journals are suggested to meet the specific needs of the elementary students.

To conclude, I hope that elementary school counselors and counselor educators find this book useful to meet effectively the counseling needs of elementary schools in the new millennium. I strongly suggest a paradigm shift in which school counselors must become proactive and creative in their approaches to help elementary students develop their potentials to the fullest.

Daya Singh Sandhu

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank God Almighty for His help, without whose Will not even a blade of grass moves in this universe. There are too many persons to be mentioned here who directly or indirectly made the publication of this book a reality. Mere mention of these persons' names is no way sufficient to compensate them for their help. I will always remain indebted to them.

First, I thank all of the contributors for their hard work, dedication, and their chapter contributions. I am also grateful to them for having enough trust in me to serve as their editor. I sincerely appreciate these contributors' profound insights into elementary school counseling. Above all, I am thankful for their cooperation and patience. This bouquet in the hands of readers are the contributors' flowers; I just assembled, arranged, and rearranged them.

I thank Carolyn Baker, Director of Publications at the American Counseling Association, for her encouragement and guidance at every step in the preparation of the book. I also appreciate the work of Elaine Dunn, the copy editor, and the anonymous reviewers for their most valuable comments and scholarly suggestions. My appreciation also goes out to Dr. Robert Myrick for taking time from his very busy schedule to write the Foreword to this book.

I also appreciate and thank Rose Wade and Connie Wheeler for their secretarial help. Last but not the least, I would like to express my gratitude to Rob Longwell-Grace, my graduate assistant, for the library research assistance, proofreading, and valuable comments.

Finally, I thank my lovely wife Usha for her moral support and encouragement. For those I inadvertently missed or who helped me indirectly, please accept my thanks and apology.

Daya Singh Sandhu

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Dr. Sandhu has a special interest in school counseling, multicultural counseling, neurolinguistic programming, and the role of spirituality in counseling and psychotherapy. Previously, he has published four books: *Numerical Problems in Physics, A Practical Guide for Classroom Observations: A Multidimensional Approach, Counseling for Prejudice Prevention and Reduction* (as a senior author), and *Empowering Women for Equity: A Counseling Approach* (as a second author). Dr. Sandhu also edited or coedited three more books: *Asian and Pacific Islander Americans: Issues and Concerns for Counseling and Psychotherapy, Faces of Violence: Psychological Correlates, Concepts, and Intervention Strategies,* and *Violence in American Schools: A Practical Guide for Counselors.*

Dr. Sandhu has also published more than 50 articles in state, national, and international journals. His first book was in Punjabi poetry, *Satranghi Pingh*. Dr. Sandhu is also an experienced presenter and professional workshops trainer. He has made more than 100 presentations at the international, state, and local levels. His presentations have focused on a wide variety of subjects that can be broadly classified under school counseling and multicultural counseling.

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Section I

PROACTIVE COUNSELING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Introduction:

CHALLENGES FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELORS IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Daya Singh Sandhu

AS WE ENTER THE 21ST CENTURY, many of the social problems encountered at the end of the 20th century continue to plague us and our schools. Crime, while decreasing, is still with us, and violent crime has invaded our schools—places once thought to be safe havens. Poverty still prevails, despite a booming economy. According to some economists, the gap between the haves and the have-nots is greater than ever before, and the majority of people living in poverty continues to be children. When children come to school hungry and sometimes homeless, it is difficult for them to concentrate on their schoolwork. And while the rate of divorce has seemingly stabilized, it remains at the 50% level, leaving many families feeling its devastating effects (Norton & Moorman, 1987). At one time it was thought that young children were immune to the effects of society, and counselors were reserved for the later years—high school, college, and adulthood. Now we know that society's problems affect all ages, including young children. Although recent events make us question whether or not schools are the safe havens that we originally thought they were, for many students, they do in fact provide refuge in an otherwise unstable life situation. If schools are to continue offering this refuge, however, teachers, administrators, and counselors need to be adroit in determining the needs of their students. Only then can they effectively offer programs for students and respond to their needs.

In 1990, Edwin Gerler, Joseph Ciechalski, and Larry Parker edited the book *Elementary School Counseling in a Changing World*, which addressed many of the issues confronting elementary school counselors. That same year, E. R. Gerler, Canary Hogan, and Kathleen O'Rourke published a book for middle school counselors titled *The Challenge of Counseling in Middle Schools*. While targeted to a different audience, this book is still excellent for elementary school counselors and counselor trainees. The issues that these authors addressed are still of a great concern for elementary school counselors, as are other issues confronting children today.

For example, child development and peer acceptance are major issues with which elementary school counselors need to concern themselves. Because of poor socializing in the family, many children come to school unable to develop positive peer relationships. They may be rejected by their peers because they are overly aggressive or are simply ignored because of their shyness or poor social skills. Children who have this experience and fail to learn the appropriate behaviors demanded by peers face a loneliness in childhood that often continues into adulthood.

The media's influence on children today is another issue confronting schools. Most likely, this influence will continue to grow in the 21st century as technology changes and develops. It is not uncommon now for each member of the family to have their own television in their own room. Educators were concerned enough about the lack of conversation that occurred with families who watched television, but at least they were in the same room and parents could monitor what their children were watching. With the proliferation of television and cable, families have been able to afford numerous sets, each with cable. As never before, children can isolate themselves in front of the tube. Television is far more popular than books ever were and continues to compete with parents, school, and peers for socializing time. During this television watching, children are inundated with commercials that mentor them at a very young age into the world of American consumerism. This in turn puts pressure on parents to give their children increasing numbers of toys and gadgets to make them feel like they are being good parents. And children watch an abundance of violence on television as well, more than they ever would in real life. This suggests to them that violence is an acceptable way to solve life's problems. Although the numerous studies that have been conducted over the years fail to show a direct relation between television violence and acts of violence, there have been a number of correlational studies that say there is reason for concern (LeMasters, 1974; Myrtek, Scharff, Brugner, & Muller, 1996; Tooth, 1985). Consumer spending, time spent on homework, time socializing with friends, and acting in an aggressive manner are all affected to some degree by television viewing. Fortunately for school personnel, one study with preschoolers showed that students who were trained to be gentle and affectionate with one another were less affected by aggression than would normally have been expected (Marton & Acker, 1981).

Changes in school systems across the United States raise the question of whether some elementary school children face academic pressures in their schools that may overwhelm them. Parents clamoring for gifted programs to be established in their schools and demanding that their children be placed in them are part of the American school landscape. School scores of elementary school children are now being used to determine children's admittance into middle and high school gifted programs as well. And with the rise of magnet schools, students are competing with one another to gain admittance into programs. If indeed elementary school grades figure heavily in decisions that are made about admittance into these programs, this may place undue pressure on a student trying to negotiate the nuances of school. And this pressure can be carried over into extracurricular programs as well. Many students are forced to compete on the ball field, on the ice arena, and in the music hall (to name a few examples) by well-meaning but demanding parents who think that their children need to begin early if they are to be successful in a particular field.

Multicultural issues continue to change the nature of American education. Schools in the United States are increasingly racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse, and it appears that this will continue to be the case in the new millennium. Elementary school personnel traditionally have been from White, middle-class backgrounds, and teacher training programs have not always provided adequate training in the area of multiculturalism or diversity. As a result, teachers, counselors, and administrators end up feeling their way along, often feeling like they are "teaching the other." Cultural bias is an inevitable result, and unless school personnel do a better job of educating themselves about the cultural differences in the schools, they will have a hard job minimizing the effect of this cultural bias. Cultural diversity is something that should be celebrated, not something to be avoided and ignored.

Sexual development and orientation is also an area that is likely to have an impact on elementary schools. Although Gerler, Hogan, and O'Roueke (1990) addressed this issue in their book on middle school counseling, the fact is that many of the elementary school students deal with issues of sexual development early in their life. This can mean development of secondary sex characteristics, establishing relationships between and within genders, and providing role models for appropriate sex role behavior. Ten percent of the children in the elementary schools are lesbian, gay, or bisexual (Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948), and many of these children begin to realize their same-sex attraction in the elementary school years. The rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people are more openly discussed now than they were 20 or even 10 years ago. This issue is one of both sexuality and multiculturalism.

Divorce and single-parent homes are a fact of life for many elementary school children. Anger, fear, guilt, and depression are common feelings among children of divorce (Hetherington, 1979). Although children are adaptable, additional stress on children can exacerbate the problems related to divorce. Loss of income often results from divorce, and some children are forced to move from one home to another, disrupting their social patterns and sometimes causing them to change schools midyear. Parenting under the best of circumstances is difficult, but the additional stress that divorce adds makes this job even more difficult. Many people do believe that children whose parents divorce are scarred for life by the experience, which is cause for concern (Wallerstein & Blackeslee, 1989).

Students often begin to experiment with drugs while in elementary school. Many children have parents who suffer from drug and alcohol addiction. Generally, the simplistic "just say no" message is not enough for students when their peer group is experimenting with drugs and alcohol. Elementary school students who are taught that drugs and alcohol are wrong face a dilemma if they go home and encounter parents and relatives who take drugs or drink alcohol. Parental alcoholism has a serious negative effect on children's development, and school counselors can play an important role in helping these children work through the emotions and issues with which they are confronted.

Children who are victims of child abuse will have emotional and perhaps physical scars that will last throughout their lifetime. Once again, children who are victimized at home may view school as a safe haven where they are free from the abuse inflicted on them by their caregiver. Victims of child abuse need to be treated with empathy and care. Child abuse often occurs in situations in which parents were abused themselves or in which the family has an undue amount of stress placed on it (Giles-Sims, 1985). In a society in which corporal punishment of children is condoned, many parents resort to violence as a form of discipline, with child abuse occurring as a result. Children may be reluctant to come forward with the information that they have been physically abused, because they may have been told not to tell, leaving it up to school personnel to see the signs.

Although teachers undoubtedly have a tremendous impact on students confronting these issues, it takes a whole school to educate a child. Teachers, counselors, and school administrators need to develop the empathy necessary to work with children who are confronting these issues. By determining student needs, educators can offer programs that are responsive and effective. It is hoped that school counselors will also be ready to face the many challenges to come in the new millennium. I hope that this book, a collection of many authors' experiences, expertise, and perspectives, will help the school counselors, counselor trainees, and counselor educators to help the elementary children of the new millennium.

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Chapter 1

A MODEL OF SCHOOL COUNSELING: USING A PROACTIVE AND POSITIVE APPROACH

Alfiee M. Breland and Daya Singh Sandhu

THE CURRENT PREVALENCE OF PROBLEM BEHAVIOR in U.S. schools has been well researched and documented (Breland, 2000). The United States has witnessed and endured disturbing encounters and unspeakable horrors, including school bombings and shootings. Furthermore, we have watched as the need for programs that address "at-risk" students has increased in size and importance (Johnson & Johnson, 1995; Keys, Bernak, & Lockhart, 1998). Our school environments are changing, and with the change in environment comes an increased need for alterations in the provision of services to students. One ever-evolving service offered to students is that of counseling. School counseling has experienced great growth and change since it was first introduced to U.S. schools in the late 1800s (Paisley & Borders, 1995). At that time, education was legally compulsory in the United States, although in practice, for many segments of the population including African Americans and Native Americans, it was not (Papanek, 1993). Initially, the role of the earliest school counselors was that of guidance in vocational endeavors (Schmidt, 1993). It is possible that the task of providing guidance services operated quite smoothly given the monocultural population with which school guidance counselors of those times worked. In many ways, times have clearly changed since the late 1800s, as the present school realities include racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity and counseling services that extend far beyond vocational pursuits (Paisley & Borders, 1995).

Given the aforementioned ideas, it is imperative that school counselors develop new paradigms for use in guiding their school counseling practices. Specifically, we believe that counselors can no longer afford to operate within a framework that uses passive, reactive efforts rather than aggressive, proactive efforts in working with school-age young people. We therefore present the following ideas in an attempt to assist in the development of a professional paradigm shift. First, we briefly describe the traditional approaches to school counseling and discuss the pros and cons of these methods. Next, we present a general overview of the international proactive model of school counseling as developed by Sandhu and Portes (1995). Then we present a detailed proactive model of school counseling that builds on the work of Sandhu and Portes and is tailored for use in U.S. schools. Finally, we offer practical suggestions on how school counselors nationwide might adopt this new proactive model and how training programs might integrate it into their curricula.

TRADITIONAL APPROACHES TO SCHOOL COUNSELING

Recall that in the past, the few people who were able to access the services of guidance counselors were those with wealth and status in society (Schmidt, 1993). It is therefore probably no surprise that the focus of school counseling was vocational in nature, because the people who were able to obtain an education at that time were also the ones who would most likely have career choices to make. In addition, counseling existed in a time when familial problems and concerns were not widely discussed and when the field of therapy was reserved for either those with severe mental illnesses (Smith & Robinson, 1995) or the few who were comfortable with the practice (Garfield & Bergin, 1994). After World War I, the school counseling profession witnessed an increase in theory development and practice, with a primary focus on how school counselors might best serve students with personal concerns. The next great paradigm shift in the profession came after World War II and can be described through Gladding's three themes (as cited in Schmidt, 1993): (a) the popularity of Carl Rogers's client-centered counseling approach, (b) the war itself, and (c) government involvement in the counseling profession. Subsequent to these times, school counseling has continued to grow and evolve into the profession we know today. Presently, it is safe to assert that school counseling continues to search for the one primary approach to which most members of the profession will adhere. Suffice it to say that although many school counselors profess a respect for the comprehensive and developmental programming approach, they continue to struggle with definitively stating an overarching counseling method.

SANDHU AND PORTES'S (1995) PROACTIVE MODEL OF SCHOOL COUNSELING

The literature supports the need for a specific approach to school counseling. Indeed, there are numerous conceptual writings that advocate for the comprehensive and developmental programming approach (Paisley & Borders, 1995). Within this approach lies strong support for "primary prevention and the promotion of healthy development for all students" (p. 150). In accordance with this view, we present Sandhu and Portes's (1995) proactive model of school counseling (PMSC). This model consists of five components, including concepts, operations, evaluation, public relations, and personal development, and it has as its major focus the goal of "empowering school counselors to regain their credibility [and] assert their profession's significance" (Sandhu & Portes, 1995, p. 12). The aforementioned components of PMSC are demarcated into major elements, which describe how each of the components might look in practice. Finally, the components and elements are combined into major goals, which the school counselor should use as overall professional guidelines. Table 1.1 is a graphic representation of the PMSC.

In general, Table 1.1 offers a mechanism for use in assisting counselors in expanding and solidifying their roles in the schools. Specifically, the path to each major purpose (listed at the bottom of the table as "Goals") is presented in the specific activities listed in the column above it. For example, under the goal of Explanations (see Table 1.1), for a school counselor to explain her or his role in the school setting, it is imperative that she or he focus on providing successful services, developing a systematic plan of public relations, sharing information with the media, lobbying for legislative support, and collaborating with other professional organizations. Each of these behavioral elements serves to explain the school counselor's role under the rubric of the public relations component. By following the aforementioned example, one can ascertain how each major component can be completed by using the behavioral elements en route to completing the specified goals. This model, though quite intricate, is useful in assisting counselors to better understand and educate others about their role in the schools.

From an international perspective, school counseling as it presently exists is a Eurocentric, Western European phenomenon. Indeed, when educators, parents, and students in other countries are asked to describe the role of the school counselor, they offer responses that parallel those of the majority culture in the United States. In Canada, for instance, empirical studies suggest that school counselors are expected to "become highly involved in providing services that involve support, referral, education, and information" (Paulson & Edwards, 1997, p. 67). Furthermore, Paulson and Edwards found that parents expect school counselors to collaborate extensively with them and to develop programming for all school children that includes teacher consultation services, programming for children with special needs, and community liaison programming. South Africans share a similar view of the role of the school counselor, in that school counselors are expected to fill a variety of needs in the school. They differ, however, in their views regarding the specialized training of the person who should fill this role. In a 1990 study, it was reported that in Botswana many schools have a guidance teacher or volunteer for the position who is often chosen by the headmaster (Rollin, 1990). In addition, recent empirical research from the African Cape Peninsula demonstrates that the school counselor devotes almost half of her or his time to teaching as opposed to actual counseling (Berard, Pringle, & Ahmed, 1997). It is clear that around the world, school counseling is viewed in much the same way as it is here in the United States. Theoretically, school officials, parents, and students appear to recognize the importance of the school counselor, yet too often such theoretical recognition does not translate into practice. This important idea speaks to the importance of the PMSC internationally and to the significance of its adaptation for the United States.

A PROACTIVE COUNSELING MODEL FOR USE IN THE UNITED STATES

To fully describe the need for a proactive model for school counseling, we must first look at why the need exists. As a trainer of school counselors, the first author often

Table 1.1 A Proactive Model for School Counseling

A. Major components	Conceptual	Operational	Evaluation	Public relations	Personal development
B. Major elements	1. Philosophy	1. Organizational structure	1. Preplanned & systematic approach	1. Focus on services and successes	1. Continuing education
	2. Goals and objectives	2. Additional resources	2. Comprehensive approach	2 A systematic plan of public relations	2. Professional workshops
	3. Priorities	3. Major aspects/ components	3. Accountability issues	3. Information sharing with media	3. Attain licenses and specialty certifications
	4. Distinctive features of the program	4. Characteristics of proactive approaches	4. Focus on outcomes instead of processes	4. Lobbying for legislative support	4. School board policies and procedures
	5. Special agenda for the year	5. Implementation strategies	5. Counselor efficiency and program effectiveness	5. Collaboration and information sharing with other professionals	5. State guidelines and national trends
C. Goals	Expectations	Equity	Excellence	Explanations	Efficacy

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encounters students whose main priority in pursuing school counseling is to "escape" the classroom or to make the transition into educational administration. That is not to say that an overwhelming majority of the people who have graduated from the training program are not truly invested in providing counseling services; it is, however, a reality that the first author faces regularly. Too often, students in the school counseling section will ask why it is they need to take courses in basic counseling theory, research, and counseling methods. They often ask, "Why can't I just take a few education courses or courses in child development and be done?" Such questions leave the first author searching for clear and concise ways to explain that a school counselor is, above all else, a person who counsels and that counseling in the schools involves more than just doing course scheduling with children and adolescents. If counselor trainees can understand and accept the importance of redefining themselves as full-fledged mental health professionals whose work setting is the school, it seems that they are immeasurably more able to empower themselves in solidifying their identities and asserting themselves with their peers and superiors. In this vein, the goal of this section is to more fully explicate the PMSC as it relates to work with school counselor trainees and graduated school counselors. It is no longer enough to say that the school inhibits the school counselor's ability to effectively define herself or himself and conduct her or his work. It is hoped that the presentation of the following framework for school counseling and training programs will provide school counselors with some much needed ammunition to empower and more concretely identify themselves. We complete this task by reviewing each of the major components of the model adapted to fit a U.S. perspective.

Conceptually, the PMSC is used as a "blueprint for developing a systematic guidance and counseling program in the school" (Sandhu & Portes, 1995, p. 14). The utility for this *conceptual* component has obvious implications for schools internationally, yet here in the United States it appears that we already have some concept of what constitutes a good school counseling program. In the PMSC, it is essential that counselors consider their philosophy, goals and objectives, priorities, and the distinctive features of their programs and develop special agendas for each academic year. Consider, however, the multitude of research and theory that exists in the United States regarding school counseling philosophy (Schmidt, 1993), goals and objectives (Keys et al., 1998), and priorities (Magnuson & Norem, 1999), and it becomes clear that the most relevant conceptual pieces for school counselors are the distinctive features of their programs and the development of special agendas for each academic year. These concepts can be implemented in schools, as they are nongeneric and uniquely tailored to fit the needs of the school administrators, parents, teachers, students, and school counselors in individual settings. As an example, note the work of Keys et al. (1998), who developed an innovative approach to working with at-risk school youths. They described a program that might easily be altered from year to year and that allows a school counselor to provide services tailored to fit the needs of the people in their particular school climate.

The *operational* component serves to guide counselors in achieving their stated goals. It includes the elements of organizational structure, resource allocation, major aspects or components, the utilization of proactive techniques, and implementation strategies. In the United States, school counselors have the benefit of strong, organized governing bodies, including the American School Counselor Association and the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, that have provided a great deal of structure toward the goal of defining the school counselors' specific operations in the school setting. Given these proposed structures, it is important for school counselors to engage in aggressive and persistent lobbying in an effort to see these theoretical ideas implemented nationwide (R. J. Steward, personal communication, May 21, 2000).

The *evaluation* component of the PMSC has unique applicability to a U.S. population, in that parents and students are often quite interested in appraising the school counselor's work. Such an interest is quite different from that in other countries in that, often, parents and students in other countries are not necessarily as invested in understanding the outcomes of the school counselor's work (Oakland & Hu, 1989). Conversely, in the United States, school counselors should embrace the idea of regular evaluation, as it demonstrates to others their belief in the quality of the services they provide, and it offers them an opportunity for feedback and exchange with colleagues that might assist them in improving their offerings to clientele. The improvement of services can only serve to bolster various constituents' belief in the importance of the school counselor's role.

The *public relations* component appears to have the same applicability abroad as it does here in the United States. Specifically, it is clear that the role of the school counselor is unclear to most. Countless empirical and theoretical writings point to this idea. As school counselors, we are not to be discouraged by such; instead, it is imperative that we use the public forum to reinforce what we know to be true regarding the salience of the school counseling agenda. This is the one component of the PMSC that has not been fully addressed in the United States on a large scale. Although the public relations aspect of the PMSC is somewhat self-explanatory, it is important to reiterate its purpose here. We suggest that the primary goal in this component is to explain the school counselor's role to all with whom the counselor interacts. We suggest that counselors take the initiative and address their colleagues in full faculty and staff meetings, public school board meetings, regional multidisciplinary school-focused conferences, and other fora to educate colleagues and peers about their services and identities. Such education makes it easier for others to understand the school counselor and goes a long way toward paving a path for stronger lobbying at the local, state, regional, and national levels.

It is essential that school counselors engage in continued and systematic self-improvement and professional development. Thus, *personal development*, is the final component of the PMSC. On an international scale, school counseling is in its infancy. Empirical accounts of the profession demonstrate this notion (Ito & Nakamura, 1998; Mpofu, Zindi, Oakland, & Peresuh, 1997). Therefore, where it is important for school counselors on an international scale to address the school counseling profession in general, here in the United States, this task has been repeatedly addressed, and the need for individual introspection is imperative. School counselors, and those involved in their training and development, must stop viewing school counseling as a way to exit the classroom or as a promotion into educational administration. Doing so calls for work on multiple levels, with the foremost level being that of the individual. It is essential that school counselors involve themselves in the training process to develop techniques that will allow them to develop counseling skills unique to the school setting. This requires that school counselors take coursework outside that traditionally required in training programs that will provide knowledge in understanding child and adolescent development, family dynamics and interventions, social services, and educational systems. Even if such training cannot be acquired as a part of the master's or doctoral counseling program, school counselors must be willing to engage in continuing education to develop these essential skills. Too often, school counselors are supported on a systemic level to the extent that they fulfill administrative and teacher support functions (R. J. Steward, personal communication, May 21, 2000). Furthermore, according to McGowan (as cited in Sandhu & Portes, 1995), when school budgets become constrained, the first individuals to be cut are often the school counselors who do not fill the "traditional" guidance role. To the extent that school counselors demonstrate to others that they are committed to the profession through their commitment to the intricacies of their specialty, they can move toward helping others understand the unique services that they provide and solidifying their places within the school.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter was to provide school counselors with a theoretical and practical approach to defining and improving their roles in the school. We recognize the plethora of theoretical writings that address this topic, yet we felt compelled to provide a model that we believe offers practical suggestions to counselors on how to complete the task. It is hoped that future research will measure outcomes associated with implementing the methods presented here.

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Chapter 2

NAVIGATING THE QUAGMIRE OF INHERENT ETHICAL DILEMMAS PRESENT IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAMS

Susan Norris Huss

> **"A dilemma is a situation in which there are good reasons to take different courses of action."**
>
> (Kitchner, 1984, p. 43)

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELORS IN THE NEW millennium find themselves in a very exciting, frustrating, and challenging career. The increased number of developmentally based elementary school counseling programs makes it a very exciting time. The bulk of the time can now be spent in preventative proactive rather than reactive intervention programming. The frustration occurs when there is so much to do and not enough time to do it because the student–counselor ratio is still extremely high. The challenge comes from the new issues facing elementary counselors that never seemed to be there before, such as guns in schools, more children with diagnosed mental illnesses, and more need for family interventions than ever before. Enmeshed in this excitement, frustration, and challenge is the counselor's responsibility to advocate for and protect the ethical rights of the students while honoring the legal rights of the parents and others in the students' lives who believe they need to have access to information about the students.

An elementary school counselor's client is rarely an individual isolated from others. The elementary student is part of a family (often several families) as well as the school community. In the family and school community are others (i.e., parents and teachers) who have a great deal of influence with and power over the client.

Elementary counselors must work with their client while also working with the parent (or parents) and teachers, as well as administration and others who also work with the client. *But* the school counselors are the only people who have an ethical and sometimes legal obligation to keep confidential information shared by their client. This obligation is the crux of the quagmire in which elementary school counselors find themselves.

The ethical codes of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) and the American Counseling Association (ACA) state that the counselor must work in the best interests of the client. In the school setting, this is very difficult because there are many other people (parent, teacher, administrator) who have a "best interest" concern for that child.

The Ethical Standards for School Counselors (ASCA, 1998) even identifies that the school counselor has responsibilities to students, parents, colleagues and professional associates, school, and community, as well as the profession of school counseling. With all these responsibilities, it is little wonder that the dilemma defined by Kitchner (1984) in the quote at the beginning of the chapter depicts the daily life of an elementary school counselor.

This chapter attempts to identify the key ethical issues facing the elementary school counselor and to give some general guidelines for facing the challenge of practicing in an ethical manner in the new millennium. First, the major ethical issues inherent in elementary school counseling are discussed. Then some professional responses to these issues are briefly outlined. Some basic risk management techniques are discussed so that elementary school counselors can advocate for the students without constantly fearing difficulties with all the other stakeholders who are also concerned about what is in the best interests of the student.

MAJOR ETHICAL ISSUES

Who Is the Client?

The very first ethical issue the elementary school counselor faces is determining who is the client. Because the parent is held accountable in many instances for a child or a child's behavior (i.e., property damages and safety), it would be reasonable to assume that technically the parent is the client. This issue is complicated by the uncertainty associated with the legal rights of children in the United States.

The legal rights of children in the United States have evolved during the history of this country. Nurcombe and Parlette (1994) identified four periods in the history of children and the law. From 1600 to 1800, children were considered property. From 1800 to 1900, the concept of "best interests of the child" was applied to case law to protect the child. In the period from 1900 to 1967, the judicial system became very involved in dealing with abused, abandoned, and delinquent children. Currently, the trend is toward protecting the rights of children rather than protecting children. Quinn and Weiner (1993) described the current era as balancing the rights of children and the rights and duties of their parents and the state.

Remley (1985) noted that the legal rights of young children in schools are, at best, uncertain. Croxton, Churchill, and Fellon (1988) suggested the elementary counselor cannot look to the courts for guidance because the United Stated Supreme Court had not as yet developed a clearly articulated policy delineating where the privacy rights of minors end and the rights of the parents begin. The situation has not changed since that time.

The ASCA (1998) Ethical Standards for School Counselors also addresses the complicated issue of who is the client. Reference is made to "respecting the inherent rights and responsibilities of parent for their children" (B.1.a.). Section B.2.b. indicates that "accurate, comprehensive and relevant information in an objective and caring manner" be provided "as appropriate and consistent with ethical responsibilities to the counselee," which implies that the student is the client.

Without clear-cut guidelines for determining who is actually the client, it seems appropriate to suggest that *ethically* the student is the client but that *legally* the parent is the client. If this stance is accepted, what does it mean? It means that the elementary school counselor must strive to balance the legal rights of parents with the ethical (and sometimes legal) rights of students at all times. This difficult challenge can be met by the elementary school counselor by understanding the respective rights (legal and ethical) of students and parents and being diligent in keeping all stakeholders informed about these rights as the counselor continues to advocate for the students. One of the most important issues that all stakeholders need to understand are the concerns related to confidentiality and the right to privacy as well as the concept of privileged communication.

Confidentiality and the Right to Privacy

Elementary school counselors need to be extremely sensitive to the issue of confidentiality with the child-client and be aware of the fine line that often differentiates the rights of children from the rights of adults, especially parents. Confidentiality is the right of clients to control personal information and access to it. Parents have legal rights, but it is widely believed that many students would not seek help without assurance of confidentiality (Ford, Millstein, Halpern-Felsher, & Irwin, 1997).

The most debated issue in the counseling profession is the students' right to privacy when involved in helping relationships with counselors (Schmidt, 1999). Confidentiality is a principal part of the codes of ethics and standards of practice of the ACA and the ASCA. Section B.1.a of the ACA (1995) Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice indicates that counselors should respect their clients' right to privacy and avoid illegal and unwarranted disclosures of confidential information. In Section B.3., it states that when counseling minors or individuals who are unable to give voluntary informed consent, counselors may include parents or guardians in the counseling process as appropriate. It further states that counselors should act in the best interests of clients and take measures to safeguard confidentiality. Thus, even though the professional ethical standards hint that minors' parents may be involved, it still speaks strongly to maintaining confidentiality with the minor.

The Ethical Standards for School Counselors (ASCA, 1998) speaks to confidentiality in the three sections about responsibilities to students, parents, and colleagues and professional associates. In Section A, concerning the responsibilities to students, the standards refer to protecting the confidentiality of information obtained in the counseling relationship as specified by law and ethical standards. It further suggests that such information is only to be revealed to others with the informed consent of the counselee and consistent with the obligation of the counselor as a professional person. Section B.2. states that the school counselor is to inform parents of the counselor's role, with emphasis on the confidential nature of the counseling relationship between the counselor and counselee, but Section B.1. calls for respect of the inherent rights and responsibilities of parents for their children and endeavors to establish a cooperative relationship with parents to facilitate the maximum development of the counselee.

Confidentiality is also addressed in Section C.2. Here the school counselor is to promote awareness and adherence to appropriate guidelines regarding confidentiality, the distinction between public and private information, and staff consultation.

Although the elementary school counselor can look to the ethical codes of the profession for guidance, the guidance found there is conflicting because the child is a minor and because there are others who appropriately need to be involved in working for the child's best interest. Isaacs and Stone (1999) suggested that how counselors handle confidentially, the hallmark of a counseling relationship, is often seen as critical to the success of the helping relationship. In settings in which the rights of minor clients compete with parent's and school administrators' rights and legitimate need to know, decisions concerning maintaining confidentiality can be crucial. Sometimes confidentiality becomes a legal issue under the concept of privileged communication.

Privileged Communication

Related to confidentiality is the concept of privileged communication. These terms are unfortunately often used interchangeably in the literature even though they have quite different meanings and implications for all counselors. Baker (2000) explained the difference between these two concepts as follows:

> *confidentiality* refers to an individual's right to privacy that is inherent in professional counseling relationships. . . . By contrast, *privileged communication* is a legal term used to indicate that a person is protected from having confidential information revealed in a public hearing or court of law. (p. 286)

Baker (2000) then stated that confidentiality between the school counselor and the student is established when they form a helping relationship. However, privileged communication is granted to students by states that have laws protecting the confidences shared in the relationship between students and their school counselors. In 1987, only 20 states had granted some form of privileged communication rights to students in school counseling relationships (Sheeley & Herlihy, 1989), but as more states create licensure boards for counselors, this number will increase.

Elementary counselors need to be aware of the statutes in their particular state regarding privileged communication and to know the limitations of these statutes. It is important that the counselor understands that it is the student, not the counselor, who is protected. The student is the one who decides if privilege is waived. The exceptions to privileged communication vary from state to state but generally include harm to self and others, child abuse, and court orders (Hendrix, 1991; Isaacs, 1997; Taylor & Adelman, 1989). Each elementary counselor needs to become familiar with his or her particular state's statutes.

The legal concept of privileged communication brings with it increased risk of litigation. Even though school counselors have not traditionally often been the object of lawsuits (Schmidt, 1999), during the 1980s counselors were being held more accountable for their actions and more responsible for the actions of their clients (Huey & Remley, 1989). The changing climate of schools and the seriousness of the issues being raised by children today increase the risks counselors take given the wide range of services they provide (Schmidt, 1999). Herlihy and Sheeley (1988) suggested we now live in a litigious society, which means that school counselors must take every precaution to protect not only their client but also themselves.

Some of the key ethical issues that can be problematic for elementary school counselors as they work with their minor clients have been identified. Elementary school counselors must strive to effectively advocate for those students with all the others who are concerned with the best interests of the student. Following are some professional responses for elementary counselors to use in maintaining the delicate balance with all stakeholders while functioning ethically with the student.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSES

The professional elementary school counselor can do several things to work effectively with the minor client in the school setting while also working effectively with the parents, teachers, administration, and other stakeholders. Being educated and informed about the rights and responsibilities of the client as well as the stakeholders is imperative. The elementary school counselor should then educate the many stakeholders about those rights and responsibilities. Some basic risk management practices should be practiced by the elementary school counselor that will benefit student clients as well as protect the counselor himself or herself.

Educate Self

The first response is for the elementary counselors to educate themselves about all the potential issues of conflict. An examination of the ethical codes of the profession (ACA and ASCA) is a good first step (refer to earlier section on confidentiality as an example). Even though there are limitations in the coverage of the codes, they are still considered the best source of criteria for appropriate professional behavior (Baker, 2000).

Next, elementary counselors need to be familiar with the federal, state, and local laws that relate to working with minors (Davis & Ritchie, 1993; Schmidt, 1999). They also need to be aware of local policies that affect the work they do with their minor clients.

There is a federal law that affects elementary schools greatly and should be understood by elementary school counselors. The Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), also known as the Buckley Amendment, gives parents of minor students the right to review all school records about their children (Schmidt, 1999). Besides needing to understand FERPA in terms of protecting their client's records and dissemination of information, school counselors need to be aware that FERPA relates to counselors' private notes and files. Generally, the interpretation of FERPA is that the law and its regulations do not necessarily require disclosure of private counseling notes if these are entirely private and not available to other individuals (Baker, 2000; Fischer & Sorenson, 1996; Schmidt, 1999). Many states also have privacy acts enacted.

School counselors should also review the local board of education policies that might affect students' rights. An example of this might be a local policy requiring reporting to an administrator any request for birth control or abortion information. This policy is in conflict with federal law as well as probably in opposition to the ethical responsibility for confidentiality. This is not the issue. The issue is initially that the elementary school counselor needs to be aware of the policy.

Every state in the United States has some provision requiring school personnel to report suspected child abuse. This is one of the exceptions to confidentiality and privileged communication that counselors and their students need to understand. Counselors need to know the law in their state as well as local policies and procedures for reporting suspected child abuse. The counselor is protected against legal action by parents, and there are some sanctions for failure to report (Camblin & Prout, 1989).

Another means of maintaining knowledge about the legal and ethical rights of students is to belong to the ASCA and other professional organizations. In a recent study (Iames, 2000), it was found that school counselors who belong to their professional organizations are better able to make ethical decisions than those who do not. This same study indicated that a course in ethical and legal issues in counseling increases ethical behavior. By participating in professional development activities such as these mentioned, elementary school counselors can be somewhat assured they will be knowledgeable about current issues and updates of ethical standards and can advocate for their clients accordingly.

The elementary school counselor cannot just be knowledgeable about the laws and regulations related to working with minor clients. They must also be willing and able to educate the other stakeholders about this information.

Educate the Publics

As elementary counselors strive to work with the many publics in the school community, it is in their best interests as well as the students' best interest for all the stakeholders to understand the role of the counselors, not only in terms of what the day-to-day functions are but also what the legal and ethical responsibilities of the profession are.

This education should begin at the very first staff meeting. At this time, the elementary counselor can review the program for the year as well as review for the teachers and administration what the professional standards, statutes, case law, and local policies are that influence the actions of the counselor. It is a good time to review the concept of confidentiality so that the other stakeholders do not feel the counselor is just withholding information to be contrary. The school counselor should explain that all of the school personnel are working for the best interests of the student and suggest ways for how to do that without breaching the confidential nature of the counseling relationships as well as the basic right to privacy a student has.

Parents can also be educated about the same information that was shared at the staff meeting. This can be done in a newsletter, at a parent workshop, or even during the first encounter with the parent. Generally, if parents understand, they will cooperate. If a parent is insistent upon a counselor breaching confidentiality even after the risks to the relationship have been explained, the counselor needs to realize that the parent has the legal right to know. A technique to assist parents when they are frustrated about the idea of not knowing exactly what their child said in a counseling session is to reframe the problem and focus on how to facilitate an appropriate sharing of information (Taylor & Adelman, 1989).

The students also need to be educated. This information sharing can occur during initial visits to classrooms to explain the role of the counselor, how to get to see the counselor, and what kinds of things a student might see a counselor about. At this time, a basic explanation of confidentiality and the exceptions can be given. In the initial classroom visit, the following might be shared as an explanation of confidentiality:

> Now that you know what counseling is and how you get to see me, let me tell you some things we all need to understand. When you and I talk, it is basically between you and me and the goal is to improve whatever is making you feel sad or upset. Sometimes in order to change your situation, other people will have to be told about the situation. Generally, the only times others must be told is when someone is being hurt. It really makes sense that we would want to make the hurting stop, doesn't it? So it makes sense that we need to tell others. But you and I will decide together how best to do that.

This empowers the student and creates a more positive counseling environment for the student to work harder to solve the problem.

The education of students about issues of confidentiality and its exceptions continues in each individual counseling session. Cooper and Wanerman (1977) suggested that exact comments of children should not be disclosed to adults and that the counselor's impressions should be conveyed to those who have a "need to know." To ensure that they are fulfilling the confidentiality requirement to children clients, counselors should (a) inform the child when another person is consulted, (b) try to involve the child in the decision-making process, and (c) keep the child informed of decisions made. A counselor might discuss with the student that someone needs to have some information (i.e., parent or teacher) and ask the student what he or she would like the counselor to share. Another technique would be for a shared conference during which the issue or issues are discussed.

In addition to educating though informing all the stakeholders publicly and privately, there are some other risk management activities counselors can do to increase others' knowledge as well as protect themselves from litigation. These include release of information, scope of practice, informed consent, and using an ethical decision-making model.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Release of Information

The best way for a counselor to regulate the sharing of information about a student is to develop with the legal counsel of the school district a release-of-information form. The counselor might even have one to share with the legal counsel, as it may be a new concept to the legal counsel. Having a release of information gives a sense of importance to the issue as well as being a risk management technique for the counselor. By obtaining a release-of-information signature, a counselor is practicing good risk management in his or her attempt to function as an ethical counselor who is trying to protect the client's right to privacy. The release of information must fall within the guidelines of laws that cover student records such as FERPA, discussed earlier.

Piazza and Yeager (1990) outlined what needs to be included in the release of information. It should include (a) the name of the counselor, the client, and the school; (b) the name of the person or organization to whom the disclosure will be made; (c) the reason or purpose of the disclosure; (d) the exact information to be disclosed; and (e) dates and signatures of the counselor, client, and legal guardian. An expiration date should also be included (Davis & Ritchie, 1993). Even if a child cannot give legal consent to disclose information, they should be encouraged to sign the release of information.

Scope of Practice

School counselors encounter every psychological problem that exists in school-age populations. Professional school counselors feel a strong obligation to do whatever they can to help the student. School counselors need to carefully assess what they are trained and competent to treat in the school setting. This information should be made available in a scope-of-practice document. A scope-of-practice document describes the kinds of problems counselors are qualified to treat and the kinds of treatment they are qualified to provide (Davis & Ritchie, 1993). Davis and Ritchie suggested this information be shared with school personnel, students, and parents as part of the education process discussed earlier. Some state laws, such as in Ohio, require this scope-of-practice document be displayed in the counselor's office (ORC4757-15-01). Although this law is related to mental health counseling, it is not a bad idea as a means of educating the stakeholders as well as establishing a professional atmosphere. A counselor's competencies and qualifications should be listed on the scope of practice and displayed in the office. This scope of practice does not mean a counselor automatically rejects a student who presents with a problem the counselor is not competent to treat. The counselor is still required to provide empathetic listening, especially if it is a crisis situation, but the document does establish guidelines and expectations for all the stakeholders in the school setting. A scope of practice that is adhered to by an elementary counselor goes a long way to indicate the counselor is operating in an ethical manner.

Informed Consent

Both the ACA (A.1 Client Welfare; A.3 Client Rights; A.8 Multiple Clients; B.3 Minor or Incompetent Clients) and the ASCA (responsibility to pupils; responsibility to parents) ethical standards state that informed consent is expected for clients and their parents. Fox (1997) suggested the ethical principle of informed consent means that clients have a right to be apprised in a manner and language they can understand about treatment, assessment, and other services before they agree to participate. Because informed consent may be a cumbersome experience for elementary students and also because of the unclear situation with whether parents need to be informed about each visit the student makes to the counselor's office, it has been suggested that a possible approach is to have a blanket informed consent form for all parents and students to sign when students are enrolled in the school.

Informed consent includes an explanation of what confidentiality is and the exceptions to confidentiality. Students and parents have a right to know when a breach of confidentiality may occur. Having choices and options gives the client a sense of ownership as the counseling process proceeds and may be an incentive for the client to work harder (Fox, 1997).

Embedded in the issue of informed consent is the question of when a child is competent to give informed consent. Melton (1989) noted that even for elementary children, privacy and self-determination are psychologically meaningful and should be a part of the counseling process. An often raised question in elementary school counseling is related to whether a parent needs to give permission for a student to receive counseling services. Some courts have ruled that schools have the authority to design educational curriculum and require students to participate (Alexander & Alexander, 1992). To date, no federal court ruling has specifically addressed guidance and counseling activities and parent rights to determine the appropriateness of these services for their children. As a result, school counselors are guided by state statutes and local board policies that may or may not include counseling services as an integral part of the education/school curriculum. Because courts have ruled that parents have no constitutional right to deprive their children of an education, access to counseling services may fall within this broad area of students rights (Schmidt, 1999). This should encourage elementary counselors to have a board-adopted program so it can be considered part of the education/curriculum of the school. Nugent (2000) went as far as to suggest that the general consensus in the profession is that children have a right to voluntary counseling in schools, even over their parents' objections.

Ethical Decision-Making Model

If Kitchner's (1984) quote at the beginning of the chapter is accurate, then elementary school counselors face ethical dilemmas daily and need assistance in reaching decisions. There are numerous good models available, but all include some basics. First, the ethical issue needs to clarified. Then consultation needs to take place. This can be with school counselors in like communities, knowledgeable counselor educators, ethical committees (ASCA and ACA), and the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors. From there, it is a simple decision-making model. A key issue is related to Kitchner's quote. Each action can be justified, so it is important to look at the potential consequences of each decision. Lastly, documentation of the process is vital to demonstrate the counselor is attempting to function in an ethical manner for the best interests of the client. Consultation and documentation are key issues to keeping litigation to a minimum.

Using the four practices of obtaining a release of information, knowing one's scope of practice, using informed consent forms, and following an ethical decision-making model are means of educating the stakeholders and risk management activities. Elementary school counselors who are educated, who educate their publics, and who follow these practices will be functioning as ethical elementary counselors. There is one last activity that I believe is very important for an ethical elementary counselor to do, and that is to be a constant advocate for their clients.

ADVOCATE FOR CLIENTS

When an elementary school counselor believes the policies of a school district are in conflict with the state and federal laws or the ACA and ASCA ethical codes, it is suggested that they work to change such policies (Davis & Ritchie, 1993). Schmidt (1999) suggested that when policies seem to be in conflict with state law, counselors are duty-bound to raise these issues. This can be accomplished partly through the education suggestions made earlier. It would also be a good idea for the counselor to provide documentation to support his or her belief. This would include providing the administration with copies of the ethical codes and the laws that are in question. Oftentimes when working with administrators, if the reason for the policy is discussed, the counselor can accomplish the goal without infringing on rights of privacy for the student and parents.

Huey (1986) recommended that when a possibility of a conflict exists between a counselor's loyalty to the employer and the client, the counselor should always attempt to find a resolution that protects the rights of the client. The ethical responsibility is to the client first and the school second.

Elementary school counselors also constantly advocate for their students with parents and teachers. Through working with these stakeholders to understand all the concepts presented in this chapter, counselors are definitely advocating for their clients and working in their best interests.

SUMMARY

An ethical professional elementary school counselor in the new millennium will have a working knowledge of the issues inherent in working with minors (i.e., confidentiality and privileged communication) and be able to communicate that knowledge to the key stakeholders in the student's life (i.e., students, parents, and teachers). That counselor will also practice some risk management behaviors, such as using documents for informed consent, release of information, and scope of practice, to further educate the school publics and protect the rights of the clients. Following an ethical decision-making model that includes consultation and documentation is also important.

As the professional elementary counselor moves into the new millennium, the ethical concerns will only increase as the issues facing today's young people continue to change. By being knowledgeable, sharing that knowledge, and advocating for their clients, the professional elementary school counselor will meet the challenges of this exciting profession.

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Section II

DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Chapter 3

INTERCONNECTIONS AMONG COGNITIVE, PHYSICAL, AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Earl Folse and Daya Singh Sandhu

SCHOOL COUNSELORS SHOULD BE AWARE OF the limitations of traditional, verbal counseling in relationship to school-age children's cognitive abilities. The demands of traditional, insight-oriented counseling do not make allowances for the meager verbal and cognitive skills that children in the age ranges of 6–12 years possess. Play therapy or some form of physical counseling, such as art therapy, may be more appropriate and more effective than verbal counseling for this age group.

If children's cognitive limitations are viewed as barriers to counseling, then children's physical limits are almost totally ignored by school counselors. There is little recognition that physical and mental development are contiguous. Furthermore, developmental changes in these areas depend on children's social interactions with playmates, parents, and siblings. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the interrelationships of physical, cognitive, and social changes in children's development and to draw parallels and implications for counseling the school-age child.

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

One of the most well-known theories of child cognitive development is that of the Swiss psychologist, Jean Piaget. His theory is based on direct observation of children's interaction with physical and mental stimulation. Piaget's theory is a stage theory, in which discrete developmental changes take place within a specified age range or ranges. A brief review of the theory reveals three specific periods (Inhelder, 1962).

Stage I, the sensorimotor period, lasts from birth to 18 months of age. It is characterized by basic physical activities that infants perform to manipulate objects within their limited range of influence. Stage II is the concrete operations stage and lasts from 18 months to 12 years. This stage is characterized by more advanced thinking than that of the sensorimotor period but is still limited by the actions that children can perform on objects. Finally, Stage III is that of formal operations, characterized by "scientific reasoning" or, more accurately, the adult's ability to think about the objects of thought.

The period of concrete operations yields the most information about school-age children's cognitive development. The general description of concrete operations from Piaget's theory states that children understand concepts in which they are able to manipulate information in a concrete fashion. In other words, children must have "hands-on" methods of exploring concepts before they can understand them. In the concrete operational stage, children's thinking is understood by observing the types of actions they perform on objects. For example, when asked which holds more water, a short, stout container or a tall, thin one, children in the earliest stages of the concrete operational period of cognitive development may say either container. When water is poured from one container to another, showing that the volume is the same, the child will still respond that her or his choice holds more.

Piaget's explanation for the preoperational child's inability to "conserve" matter, in other words, to accurately make predictions about the holding capacity of the container, is that she or he can focus on only one physical dimension at a time. The child cannot understand that the thin container compensates by being tall or that being stout compensates for being short. In later stages of the concrete operational period, the child can "decenter" (Shaffer, 1999, p. 249), that is, can focus simultaneously on the height and width of the containers. Additional mental capacities develop in the concrete operational period. The ability to perform classification tasks through the use of cognitive addition and subtraction takes place in this stage. Shaffer described cognitive classification as the concrete operational child's ability to form mental subclasses of objects and ideas. As with the ability to decenter, the child can now focus on more than one detail at a time and now understands that subclasses form a whole category. Mental subtraction implies that the child can remove subclasses from a category as easily as she or he can include them. *Seriation*, the ability to make linear arrangements of objects by physical characteristics such as height or weight, also develops in this period (Schaffer, 1999, p. 250). Again, this cognitive capacity matures as a result of children's increasing ability to manipulate more than one mental concept at a time.

Piaget coined the term *horizontal decalage* (Schaffer, 1999, p. 250) to suggest that cognitive abilities do not develop simultaneously. Some cognitive operations lag behind, whereas others unfold quickly. Additionally, their development is idiosyncratic. For example, one child may perform well on conservation tasks but cannot make series judgments, whereas another child may not conserve but can do seriation tasks.

Piaget's theory provides a powerful observational framework of visible behaviors, which yield valuable clues to a child's cognitive capacities. Especially useful to the elementary school counselor should be the implication that children in the earliest phases of concrete operations—from approximately 3–6 years of age—are often incapable of handling more than one concept at a time. More importantly, children at this age may have difficulty with even a single concept, if they are unable to make concrete, physical manipulations of representational, allegorical, or symbolic concepts. A different, but equally compelling framework for understanding children's thinking involves the concept of information processing (Plotnik, 1999).

Information processing is a theoretical explanation for memory and for the use that humans make of the contents of memory. The information-processing approach uses four different levels to explain how people manipulate, control, and arrange information to comprehend the world. The first level in the information-processing model of memory is that of the senses. Stimulation from the environment must impinge on one's sense organs if it is to have any chance of progressing to memory. At this level, the physical stimulation of the senses comprises a person's representation of stimuli in the environment. For example, the firing of rods and cones in the retina of the eye and the vibrations of hair cells in the inner ear are sight and hearing, respectively. The second level involves recognizing and processing this sensory stimulation in some fashion. Perhaps this stage is best thought of as an afterimage that one might experience when a bright light is switched off, or as a ringing in one's ears after a loud noise has dissipated. Attention to this refractory stimulation is perhaps the most important variable. It is in attending that humans begin the long journey toward memorizing the information and making use of it. The third level is referred to as short-term memory (STM). This is the first stage of actual memory processing and has several characteristics. Some of these characteristics involve limits. STM can hold only seven bits of information at a time. Think of your home phone number. How many digits does it contain? If you said seven, you're right. There's a reason. The seven digits comprise the bits of information that make up your number. Any more than that and chances are good that you would be incapable of remembering a phone number. An absolute limit on the amount of information stored in STM is nine bits of information. STM is also time limited. It lasts for only about an hour. Go back for one moment to your home phone number. How did you first memorize it? Probably, upon first hearing your number, you repeated it over and over. This is one form that storage of information can take at this level. Hearing yourself repeat the number over and over comprises the way you maintain and use the information in STM. Repetition, acoustical storage, time, and content limits all characterize STM. The fourth and final stage of the model comprises what most of us would consider true memory. It is referred to as long-term memory (LTM). Unlike STM, LTM has unlimited storage capacities and infinite time limits. It seems to hold everything forever. The manner in which LTM accomplishes these prodigious feats is through association. LTM uses information already stored and connects it through the use of many different strategies, to hold the contents of memory. One of the strategies of LTM is categorization. To remember, people often resort to classification of objects, places, events, and ideas to sort and organize the contents of memory. This particular strategy bears a direct impact on understanding children's cognitive capacities. Piaget has identified classification as a developing ability of the concrete operational child. LTM uses classification as a strategy for recall of objects and events. By implication, if the concrete operational child has difficulty with classification, then she or he will also have difficulty in remembering events and objects. There are other implications of using the information-processing model in explaining children's cognitive development. The capacities of STM are limited. They may develop quickly and completely in preoperational children. However, as the LTM uses more subtle strategies in housing and recalling the contents of memory, what appears as a fully developed ability to recall material when viewed from the perspective of STM may be totally inadequate to store and use information as found in the LTM capacities of a preoperational or early concrete operational child.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Children's physical development parallels their cognitive development. Their bodies change quickly in the age range of 6 to 12 years, and many important physiological and neurological changes make possible the child's cognitive development. Important neurological changes affecting cognitive development involve the nervous system and, more specifically, the brain. In general, developing neurons (individual nerve cells) make rapid and myriad interconnections between birth and 2 years of age. Furthermore, by age 2, the child's brain has reached its adult weight (Tanner, 1978). Despite this rapid and early maturation of the brain, one important process is achieved only after many additional years of growth. Specifically, the process of myelinization is not completed until puberty. Myelinization involves the depositing of a layer of insulating fat over nerve cells. This insulating layer allows for more rapid transport of neurochemical information along cell walls. The increase in transport speed makes possible more rapid and efficient processing of information. Some researchers have estimated that myelinization is not completed until adulthood (Fisher & Rose, 1995). Furthermore, specific formations in the brain involved in the prolonged ability to concentrate are not myelinized until puberty (Tanner, 1990). This may be the reason for decreased attention spans in school-age children (Shaffer, 1999).

Besides these hidden, neurological changes, outward bodily changes occur concurrently in school-age children. By age 12, girls in particular are likely to experience the "growth spurt" (Shaffer, 1999, p. 165). By age 10, girls enter a period of rapid physical growth that usually slows by age 12. Boys lag behind and begin their growth spurt around age 13. Because of the delay in physical growth for boys, it is not uncommon for the tallest children in junior high to be girls (Shaffer, 1999). Additionally, girls must deal with the onset of menarche, the time of first menstruation (Shaffer, 1999). The first cycle ranges from age 10 to 15 years in girls, with the average cycle beginning at age 12 (Shaffer, 1999). The earlier maturation of girls makes their school-age years more precarious.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The timing of puberty seems to have certain consequences for children undergoing changes. Not all of these changes are physical. Some involve the school-age child's social development. This is particularly true of girls who mature earlier than their female peers (Aro & Taipale, 1987). For example, early-maturing girls are often less popular and less outgoing than girls who are in sync with the maturation of their classmates. Additionally, these girls are more likely to report symptoms of anxiety and depression (Ge, Conger, & Elder, 1996).

In contrast to the disadvantages of early-onset puberty in girls, early-maturing boys seem to have advantages, particularly in the social setting. They are more likely to garner honors, feel self-confident, and have higher educational aspirations (Dubas, Graber, & Petersen, 1991; Jones & Bayley, 1950).

MORAL DEVELOPMENT

An extension of social development in children, which has parallels in cognitive development, is that of moral development. Kohlberg (1963) made an enormous contribution to the understanding of children's moral development with his theory. It is an elaboration of Piaget's theory of moral development and presents children with a series of moral dilemmas. Kohlberg postulated three stages of moral development. In Stage I, children respond in what he termed a *preconventional* manner. At the preconventional level, children react to rewards and punishments as set by authority. Morality involves getting the best deal. Children at this level are motivated by avoiding punishment and maximizing gain. At the next higher or *conventional* level of morality, children are motivated by maintaining the social order and by currying favor from those in authority. Tangible reward is no longer as important as being perceived as a "good" boy or girl. Children at this level are capable of understanding the perspectives of other people and take those expectations into consideration when making moral decisions. Finally, Kohlberg described the level of *postconventional* morality. At this level, children no longer invest in being good but make judgments based on broad, moral principles that may conflict with written codes of behavior.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SOCIAL AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

The changes discussed in school-age children's development so far appear to occur in isolation. Physical growth seems distinct from cognitive development, and social changes appear different from physical metamorphosis. Appearances are deceiving. None of these changes occur in a vacuum. All are simultaneous and interdependent. One theorist recognized the interdependence of children's development and attempted to reconcile the isolation that characterizes traditional categories of child study (Vygotsky, 1930). Vygotsky's theory of child development has been termed *sociocultural* (Shaffer, 1999, p. 259).

Vygotsky's theory recognized the importance of culture in determining children's intellectual abilities. For example, because Western children rely heavily on the written and spoken word, they learn to take notes in notebooks to aid memory. Children in hunting societies, however, may use a piece of string to make a knot to remember something. In both instances, the role of culture is paramount. Additionally, key points in Vygotsky's theory emphasize the importance of adults as transmitters of cultural learning, the social nature of speech, and the interconnection of cognitive growth and social interaction (Shaffer, 1999).

INTERCONNECTIONS AMONG COGNITIVE, PHYSICAL, AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Vygotsky's (1930) theory captures the complex interactions among physical, mental, and social development that characterize children's growth and that have implications for counseling the school-age child. For example, while speech must of necessity be dominated by logical, linear thinking, it is first and foremost a social phenomenon. Children who lack social skills in the preschool and school years may have difficulty in developing language. Conversely, without language skills, social functioning may suffer. In cognitive development, the rules and processes of memory revolve around the ability to categorize information into discrete units. We have noted that Piaget has determined that categorization is an ability of the concrete operational child, but only in the latter stages of that period. If the concrete operational child has difficulty with classification, then she or he may also experience memory problems. Lacking the ability to categorize has implications for social judgments as well. Memory demands that information about people, as well as objects and events, be placed in discrete units. A child who is incapable of placing people into categories (such as helpful and harmful) jeopardizes mental as well as physical health. Additionally, STM, with its well-defined limits and lack of involved strategies for processing and storing information, may develop earlier than LTM and thereby mask a deficit in classification that would be obvious if a Piagetian task were attempted. Physical changes also interact with memory, cognitive, and social skills. It has been stated that myelinization has been linked with attention span (Tanner, 1990). The late-maturing preschooler may suffer from an inability to concentrate in the relationship between lessened attention span and cognitive ability. This effect seems straightforward; the effect on socialization may be more subtle and more devastating. For example, the late-maturing child may be ostracized by peers and adults alike, not because of an inherent lack of ability to focus but because of an incomplete developmental process. Furthermore, because girls mature earlier than boys, boys may be at risk more so than girls. The development of reason parallels the development of moral judgments. Younger school children may be incapable of "decentering." As such, they are unable to take the perspective of another person. Such an inability dooms the child to the lowest levels of moral judgment as identified by Kohlberg.

IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELING

In general, any physical activity may benefit the school-age child suffering from developmental cognitive or social deficits. The reason revolves around the myriad ways in which physical growth aids the development of the school-age child. Physical growth complements psychological development. When children develop physical skills, they are better able to manipulate the environment. Manipulation of physical objects in the environment is one way that children develop cognitive skills. Given the limited cognitive abilities of school-age children and the developmental changes identified by Piaget in the concrete operational period, there would seem little point to traditional forms of verbal counseling. Fortunately, much has been written about the use of play therapy (see chapter 4, this volume), and that medium would seem ideally suited to the early concrete operational child. For example, sand play is one form of play therapy in which the child is given a tray of sand and miniatures to arrange in the tray (Carmichael, 1994; see also chapter 5, this volume). The basic strategy is for the counselor to provide a permissive atmosphere in which children may arrange, describe, and rearrange the resulting classifications and categories they create. This activity meets the basic criteria that the concrete operational child must have to benefit from and understand that this is a hands-on method. Children choose, manipulate, and arrange the sand and miniatures to create an ordered environment. The counselor may intervene in the children's classifications and activities to make suggestions and changes. A word of warning. Piaget has described horizontal decalage, in which children's abilities develop in an idiosyncratic fashion. Some abilities proceed apace of peers, others lag, and still other abilities outpace that of same-age children. Because physical, cognitive, and social development occur contiguously, Piaget's concept applies to all development. Additionally, one child may be well suited to verbal forms of counseling, whereas a peer in the same class and of the same age may be incapable of benefit from verbal counseling. General guidelines can help the school counselor determine which children may benefit from talk counseling. First, can the child show empathy? If so, this indicates an ability to understand concepts without the need for hands-on manipulation of objects. Because words are symbols, the ability to take the perspective of another person demonstrates a capacity to process symbolic information, which is necessary for insight-oriented counseling. Second, can the child perform a classification task? The bulk of memory is deposited in LTM; categorization is necessary for recall of complex material, and classification implies this ability. The capacity to perform a simple classification is one indication that a child can process the kinds of information that talk therapy generates.

Finally, is the child's physical development premature, less advanced than, or about the same as that of same-age peers? Children who display delayed physical development are often at risk for social difficulties among their peers and may suffer from cognitive deficits as well. The late-developing child is therefore a less viable candidate for verbal counseling, despite the possibility of a particular child being older than other children who show early physical maturation. In other words, age is not a valid indicator of ability to use symbolic thought.

SUMMARY

Cognitive, social, and physical development occur contiguously. Additionally, these factors are intricately interrelated. The physical development of a child foreshadows her or his cognitive and social capacities and relates to an array of subtle functions that range from the development of mental focus to the ability to interact effectively with peers. The elementary school counselor, when attuned to the physical development of her or his young clients, can ascertain a wide range of abilities and can more effectively serve the children in her or his charge.

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Chapter 4

PLAY THERAPY IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Peterann M. Siehl

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELORS ARE FACED WITH many challenges on a day-to-day basis. These same counselors will be called on in the 21st century to deal with more developmental and emotional issues of children than ever before. With the advent of electronic toys, violent video games, and increased television and Internet use, elementary counselors will need to increase their techniques and strategies to work effectively with children of this new technological generation. Play therapy may be the therapeutic tool for helping children in today's schools by helping to increase their self-esteem, self-control, and decision-making abilities; empowering the children through success and achievement in the playroom; and ultimately improving their ability to learn in the classroom.

It is the purpose of this chapter to briefly review the historical development of play therapy; the objections to play therapy in the schools; the space and materials necessary for instituting play therapy in counseling programs; the considerations necessary to establish a belief in the benefits of play therapy with administrators, teachers, and parents; and, finally, the uses of play therapy in the schools of the new millennium.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PLAY THERAPY

Counseling through play originated with Sigmund Freud's (1909/1955) case of Little Hans, a 5-year-old child client with a phobia. The case was the beginning of what is known today as *filial therapy,* the treatment of a child through specific instructions involving the parent as the therapeutic agent. This classic case associated a child's difficulties with emotional issues. In today's world, emotional distress in children is a commonly accepted phenomenon. Although play therapy was used by psychoanalysts in Europe, little evidence of its use appeared in the United States until 1929 (Klein, 1955).

PSYCHOANALYTIC PLAY THERAPY

Freud's work opened the door for other therapists to begin the work of child therapy. Three major therapists are credited for the inclusion of play media with children: Hermine Hug-Hellmuth, Anna Frued, and Melanie Klein. The work of these three therapists was responsible for changing the attitudes of therapists in future work with child clients.

Hermine Hug-Hellmuth was one of the first therapists to discuss the difficulty in treating child clients with adult methods. She became aware that children did not possess the verbal skills to describe their difficulties and anxieties and that they were not interested in exploring their past or were unable to adequately use the free-association exercise used in typical psychoanalysis. In her work with children, she introduced play materials and came to the realization that children's play was essential for their emotional expression. Hug-Hellmuth did not formalize a theory related to the use of play or play media with children.

Melanie Klein used play therapy with children under the age of 6 in 1919 (Klein, 1955). She believed that the play activities of children could be interpreted in the same way as free associations could be interpreted for adults. Klein encouraged children to play out their dreams, wishes, anxieties, and fantasies, which she would then interpret. Her interpretations usually revolved around symbolic, sexual content and early parental relationships. If the therapist could help children understand and gain insight into these interpretations and understand these fantasies, then their anxieties would diminish.

Anna Freud used play as a way to develop a relationship with the child (Freud, 1965). Freud believed that the relationship between the therapist and the child was critical in creating an atmosphere that would allow the child to be free in his or her play. She believed that to really reach the inner world of the child, she must be liked by the child. She did not place a great deal of emphasis on symbolic interpretation of play. Freud viewed much of the child's play as a language of current experiences of the child's daily life. Once the relationship of the therapist and child was well established, play sessions became more verbal and imagery was used to help the child. Both Klein and Freud believed that play uncovered the child's unconscious conflicts and desires and that play was the child's manner of free associating.

RELEASE THERAPY

The work of David Levy and Gove Hambidge in "release therapy" was the next major movement in play therapy. Release therapy (Levy, 1938) consisted of the therapist building a relationship with the child and using structured activities to slowly recreate the painful experience identified as causing the child's discomfort. Throughout the therapy, the therapist creates scenes with toys that comes closer and closer to the actual event experienced by the child. After each scene is played out by the therapist, the child is allowed to free play. The hope is that the child will reduce his or her anxiety through this desensitization type of play technique.

Gove Hambidge (1955) furthered Levy's work and labeled the method *structured play therapy*. In this form of play, the therapist establishes a relationship with the client and then through a structured play activity presents the scene of the painful or traumatic experience known to cause the child's anxiety directly to the child. The child is allowed free play as a recovery process to the extreme intrusive experience.

RELATIONSHIP PLAY THERAPY

Jesse Taft (1933) and Frederick Allen (1934) were leaders in the use of relationship play therapy. The basis of this therapy was centered on the relationship between the therapist and the client. The belief in reliving past events and interpretations of play were replaced with play in the "here and now" and the feelings associated with the present. Children were viewed as individuals capable of self-direction and self-healing if given the opportunity to play freely. The major emphasis was on the emotional release of the child, directed by the child, in an atmosphere that was safe.

NONDIRECTIVE PLAY THERAPY

Virginia Axline (1947) expanded on the work of Carl Rogers and developed nondirective play therapy. The premise of the therapy is that children are capable of self-direction and growth. The therapist believes in building a relationship with the child that is safe, allowing the child the choice to play or remain silent, and to be actively involved with the child in the play activity through reflection of the child's feelings and thoughts as they are expressed in the session.

Landreth (1991) expanded on the work of Axline (1947) in creating child-centered play therapy. Axline's work is still the foundation of child-centered play therapy, but many modifications have helped to increase its effectiveness.

PLAY THERAPY IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Elementary school counselors were added to school staffs in the 1960s (Landreth, 1991). Up until this time, the use of play therapy had been designated to community agency settings, mental health clinics, hospitals, and other therapeutic sites delivering services outside of the schools. Play therapy was previously used with maladaptive children. With the beginning of the elementary school counselor movement, counselor educators began to encourage the use of play therapy in school settings to meet the developmental needs of all children. These first elementary school counselors used play media in working with children since their inclusion in the school setting.

The objective in schools today is to assist all students with their emotional, intellectual, physical, and social development through success in the school environment. Many children are unable to be successful in the environment if they are not ready to learn. Play therapy can help children make the transition from home to school by providing an environment that is ready to allow them to be who they are and allow them to grow as unique, capable beings.

Scenario 1: Whitney, age 4, who could not wait for school to begin, comes home from kindergarten after 4 weeks and announces she is not going to return to school. She hates school and the teacher hates her.

Scenario 2: Angela, age 7, seems withdrawn and shy in the classroom. She gets frustrated easily and often bursts into tears when any new task is assigned. Her behaviors draw students to her to help her, but she refuses to allow them to offer help.

Scenario 3: Michael, age 9, is extremely belligerent and rude to his female teacher, and he is aggressive and manipulative with the other children. He appears to have no friends and tries to use fear through his violent behavior for acceptance.

Scenario 4: Jonathan, age 6, brings a gun to school, points it at another student, and pulls the trigger, killing the student in the classroom.

Students similar to Whitney, Angela, Michael, and Jonathan exist in every school in the United States. Students with issues like those listed above create classroom difficulties for teachers, counselors, administrators, and parents. Play therapy can be useful in each of these situations.

The need for elementary school counselors, although documented in the literature, still appears in the 21st century to be an important issue in the profession. Many schools still do not have elementary counselors in every building, and some elementary counselors travel between three and five buildings with caseloads of 700 to 1,000 students. Counselors must learn to use different strategies to be effective with the vast number of problems they must face regularly. Counselors must engage in more group work, concrete counseling techniques, brief therapies, and play media to meet the needs of the children in their schools.

OBJECTIONS TO PLAY THERAPY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Individual counseling is a major function of elementary school counselors (Schmidt, 1993). The method used for student counseling should be at the discretion of the school counselor, but when play therapy is the method of choice, objections by school personnel and parents often occur. Therefore, defining and explaining play therapy to school personnel and parents is the counselor's first step in gaining support for the use of this important technique in the schools.

The term *play* is often received by individuals as a waste of time and not appropriate for the school setting. Axline (1947, p. 9) stated that play is "the child's natural medium of expression." Other therapists have supported this view (Landreth, 1991; Moustakas, 1998). It is also acknowledged in the literature that young children communicate conflicts through play (Campbell, 1993; Landreth, 1987). Building a relationship with a child is extremely important for counseling to be successful. The use of play therapy strategies can be used to help counselors build relationships with children, to understand how children view themselves and the world, and to help children understand their importance in their individual worlds and how they can resolve emotional issues and gain significance in their environment (Kaduson, Cangelosi, & Schaefer, 1997; Kottman, 1995; Oaklander, 1988). For all of these reasons, play therapy is an intervention that should be used by elementary school counselors who are responsible for individual counseling with children.

The term *therapy* causes school personnel and parents to fear that the child is seriously disturbed. Because play therapy had its beginnings in therapeutic settings of hospitals, community agencies, and other institutions that were not school based, this fear should be recognized and information provided to dispel the belief. Play therapy can be described to school personnel, administrators, and parents as a method used by school counselors to best communicate with the developmental stage of the child. Children play freely, at home, at school, and with their friends. Play therapy or counseling with toys is an effort for a trusted adult to enter the world of the child in the least intrusive manner. If the term *therapy* is a bone of contention, the school counselor should drop the term and create a more acceptable term to school personnel, administrators, and parents. Terms such as *developmental play, counseling with toys*, or *play counseling* would be appropriate.

Through adequate understanding, in-service presentations, and training, teachers, administrators, and parents could be educated to understand and become supportive of the use of play as a viable intervention. These important individuals in the life of the child could then see the benefits of this powerful technique.

Another objection to using play therapy in the school setting is having an adequate play area for children and adequate storage space for the necessary toys. Landreth (1991) recommended a playroom that is approximately 150–200 square feet (45–60 square meters) for use in individual and group play therapy. I have noticed that elementary counselors are lucky if they are given an adequate office space; therefore, a play therapy room is usually not a reality nor is it essential for children to benefit from play media use. Of critical importance is the child's need to have the opportunity to choose the method of communication that is the most natural to him or her and allows the most freedom for emotional expression. If play is this medium, then counselors should be able and willing to meet this need. Would any counselor ask an adult client to participate in a counseling session in a foreign language or respond in a manner that is uncomfortable in the session? Similarly, why should we expect a child to speak in a foreign language or to participate in "talk therapy" when the child's natural mode of communication is play?

Play therapy sessions can be held in a counselor's office, nurse's office, empty classroom, large closet, library area, cafeteria, gym area, stage, or any other space that is not being used at the time of the session. The space a counselor uses is not as important as the opportunity for choice, the acceptance of the child, and the complete attention devoted to the child during the session.

A fully equipped playroom is usually only found in an agency setting or a university training site. Most elementary counseling programs have little to no budget set aside for equipping a playroom; existing budgets are generally set up for testing and diagnostic purposes. Creative counselors can deal with the objection of cost. Counselors who wish to use play materials need to advocate for their clients by speaking to public and community organizations, local businesses, and parent groups affiliated with the school.

Toys outgrown by younger children can be donated to the counseling program, garage sale finds can reduce the demands for high-priced items, and children in the school can even become involved in the collection efforts. New toys are not always the best toys. Toys that are not broken, but used, often send a message that the toys are ready for use. Landreth (1991) described three major categories of toys for inclusion in the playroom: (a) real-life toys, (b) acting-out aggressive-release toys, and (c) toys for creative expression and emotional release. If adequate space or adequate storage is a problem, the counselor should use the tote-bag or flight-case playroom. These options include fewer toys in a portable carrier that can be easily carried or rolled from place to place or building to building. If all of these options fail, a counselor should have at least a shelf of appropriate toys and creative art supplies at all times.

In today's schools, students are often sent to the counselor because of disruptive classroom behaviors. These disruptive behaviors destroy the learning environment for others and keep the identified disruptive child from reaching his or her full potential. Young children, usually those under 9, do not have adequate verbal skills to fully express their emotions and feelings. Through the use of play media, art materials, clay, puppets, toys, and stuffed animals, children can play out their emotions, develop an internal understanding of their emotion-laden issues, and create workable solutions to their problems in the safe environment of the playroom.

Play therapy has been shown to be an effective therapeutic intervention with a variety of children's problems that stem from emotional issues. The following positive results have been cited in the literature: change in hair pulling (Barlow, Strother, & Landreth, 1985), increased self-esteem (Henderson & Gladding, 1998), improved emotional adjustment of abused children (Fagot, Hagan, Youngblade, & Potter, 1989; Harper, 1991; Mann & McDermott, 1983; Seinfeld, 1989), correction of poor reading performance (Axline, 1949; Bills, 1950; Fisher, 1953; Pumfrey & Elliot, 1970), reduced aggression from trauma (S. R. Carter, 1987), decreased barriers to school success for culturally diverse students (Cochran, 1996), improved behavior of labeled children in the classroom (Johnson, McLeod, & Fall, 1997), increased academic performance in learning-disabled children (Guerney, 1983; Landreth, Allen, & Jacquot, 1969) and children with mental disabilities (Newcomer & Thomas, 1974; Sywulak, 1984), improved self-concept (Bleck & Bleck, 1989; Crow 1989), reduced posttraumatic stress disorder (Brown, 1996), and improved adjustment of children of divorce (Cangelosi, 1997) and children diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (Kaduson, 1997), general childhood stress issues (Henniger, 1995), and attachment disorder (Hayes, 1997).

Many of the research studies completed to date in the area of play therapy show improvements with as few as six sessions and time limits of 15–30 minutes. The time limits and brief treatment approach are conducive to use in elementary schools.

The objection to noise levels associated with play therapy must also be considered. Most children do not play in total silence, although the amount of noise associated with play therapy is really minimal. The critical issue is not how loud or how much noise will occur but how the noise will be handled by teachers, administrators, and students in classes who may hear the noise. Noise can be reduced by choosing a site within the school that is not right next door to classrooms, sound proofing the area with carpet and cork squares, and, if these options are not available, reminding the child that if loud noise occurs he or she might be overheard by others.

Play therapy often means toys taken from their places and not returned to the exact space, toys tossed about the play area, and paint, clay, and paper messes. If counselors have a need for everything in its original place and a need for no mess, play therapy may be a bit frustrating for these individuals. Children are sometimes full of energy, frustrated, or aggressive in their play and need to be allowed to put these feelings and emotions out in the open without the fear of making a mess. In the school setting and the home setting, children are constantly forced to pick up, clean up, and not make a mess. Play therapy allows the child to be free, and sometimes mess is part of being free.

Allowing a child to make a mess does not mean allowing the child to be totally out of control without regard for self, the therapist, or the toys. Rules or limits are also part of play therapy. Rules exist in the real world, and rules exist in the play therapy environment too. Limits in play therapy are only made when harm to self, others, or destructive behavior to the room or toys occurs. Limits are made verbally, always giving the child the choice to follow the limit or to accept the consequence of breaking the limit. In imposing limits in this manner, counselors can help the children feel successful and powerful in making a choice. Limits help children become responsible decision makers and alleviate the need for arguing or disciplining aggressively.

MULTICULTURAL APPLICATIONS OF PLAY THERAPY

All children play! It is for this reason that play therapy is a viable tool to use with children from different cultures. Gladding (1998) stressed that the creative arts could enhance multicultural counseling. The creative arts are certainly one part of play therapy. In some cultures, counseling is considered punishment, shameful and embarrassing, a sociopolitical force, or as an interaction that focuses on weaknesses or deficits rather than on a child's positive traits or self-esteem. Play therapy can cross all of these barriers and allow the children a safe space to express themselves in a manner comfortable and acceptable to their individual needs. One of the barriers in multicultural counseling is language; play certainly is a way to overcome this common barrier. Play is universal. All children do it, enjoy it, and learn from it. Play can help relieve stress and put a smile on even the darkest episode in a child's life. Play sessions can help a child feel successful in decision making and help the child release the tensions and frustrations that may occur from time to time. If emotional release occurs and helps the child feel good about him- or herself, this positive feeling will carry over to the classroom and help the child feel positive and aid in academic and classroom success.

COUNSELORS, TEACHERS, AND PARENTS AS PLAY THERAPISTS

One of the greatest benefits to play therapy is helping the important people in the lives of children understand and accept the concept of the value of play and this special time devoted to children. Counselors, administrators, teachers, and parents can all be taught, through in-service or special training programs, the concepts and strategies of play therapy. Filial therapy teaches parents to work with their children, using play therapy as a means of connecting with their children, understanding them, and seeing them in a new way. Schools have trained teachers to serve as play agents with children in the school during free periods or before and after school. Training usually includes teaching participants tracking responses, limit-setting strategies, and how to give direct attention to the child.

Individuals who have worked with children from the play viewpoint have noted greater appreciation for the children and more success in academics and in parenting issues. Discipline problems have been reduced and successes have been the rule of thumb. Adult participants in play therapy training have found that after the training they work with and view children in a new light. Most participants find that their own parenting approach changes, children are valued and honored, and simple daily criticisms are reduced and replaced with more supportive and positive encouragements.

SUMMARY

It is my hope that this chapter has piqued the interest of elementary school counselors in the area of play therapy. If an elementary counselor is already using play medium in counseling, he or she should continue to do so and consider training others to be part of the movement to work with children on a more comfortable level, in their language of play.

For those counselors who are interested in reading more about play therapy, I would suggest reviewing a text on theoretical models like *Handbook of Play Therapy* (Schaefer & O'Connor, 1983) to find a theoretical approach with which they can identify. Books including *101 Favorite Play Therapy Techniques* (Kaduson & Schaefer, 1997), *Once Upon a Time . . . Therapeutic Stories That Teach and Heal* (Davis, 1996), and *Windows to Our Children* (Oaklander, 1988) are excellent sources for examples of techniques, games, poetry, and mutual storytelling techniques. I also recommend that they visit the closest university to see what individual courses might be offered in play therapy. The Association for Play Therapy (www.a4pt.org) holds an annual conference each year where individuals gather to learn the latest processes in play therapy.

This chapter has provided elementary counselors an overview of the beginnings of play therapy in therapeutic settings and school settings, the objections to play therapy they might encounter in the schools and methods to combat these objections, the uses of play therapy in the school setting, and suggestions on how to recruit school personal, administrators, and parents to join the counselors as together they strive in the 21st century to meet the needs of the most precious resource, our children.

In a society with more latchkey children, two-parent working households, high rates of divorce, single parenting, and blended families, children need to be honored to feel important. The basics of play therapy—giving the child undivided attention and time, respecting the child in a comfortable medium, and working with the child in a new and different capacity—lends itself to success and joy for the children involved.

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Chapter 5

CREATIVE ARTS IN COUNSELING WITH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN: A USER-FRIENDLY APPROACH

J. Kelly Coker

PLAY AND CREATIVE EXPRESSION ARE NATURAL forms of communication and processing for children. Developmentally, children often do not have the vocabulary needed to adequately and accurately reflect their feelings, thoughts, and actions. According to Landreth (1993), children below the age of 11 find it difficult to express their emotions, feelings, and thoughts through verbal means. Because of this, toys are the words and play is the language of young children. Elementary school counselors who recognize a child's tendency toward nonverbal means of communication and who provide opportunities for other modes of expression will achieve greater success in reaching and helping their young clients.

In this chapter, the history and rationale behind the use of creative arts in counseling with children, how to implement creative strategies with flexibility and intentionality, and how to gain parental, administrative, and school support for an elementary counselor's endeavors are discussed. Ways to create a creative environment in a school setting, including use of space, materials, and techniques, are explored. Finally, creative arts techniques and suggestions for their use are presented.

WHY BE CREATIVE? WHAT THE THEORISTS TELL US

According to Jean Piaget, play facilitates learning and movement through the stages of cognitive development (Hughes, 1999). For example, a young child who engages in symbolic or make-believe play learns about logical classification and spatial relationships. Elementary school children engaged in play with peers learn the additional tasks of sharing and following rules.

Child-Centered Play Therapy

In addition to enhancing cognitive and developmental learning, play has also been theorized to enhance a child's ability to communicate feelings and thoughts. In the 1940s, Virginia Axline popularized the concept of child-centered play therapy. Building on the work of Carl Rogers, Axline developed nondirective play therapy to help child clients be self-directive in their search for desired outcomes (Axline, 1969). From the child-centered perspective, the counselor strives to create an atmosphere of genuine interest in the child, unconditional acceptance of the child, safety and permissiveness in the relationship, sensitivity to the child's feelings, respect regarding the child's ability to solve her or his own problems, trust for the child's inner direction, and an appreciation for the gradual nature of the therapeutic process (Landreth, 1993). The child-centered method of counseling requires the counselor to be both patient and permissive in working with a child. Through this process, the child takes the lead in terms of her or his manner of play and the meaning the child derives from play. The counselor engages in reflection, tracking, and restatement to help the client gain insight.

Symbolic Play

Carl Jung recognized the value of using external symbols to help clients become familiar with the struggle and ultimate resolution of conflicting archetypes. Jung's approach to counseling was found to be beneficial when working with children and adolescents. Through play with children, themes emerge that lead to the "struggle of opposites" (Allan & Brown, 1993). According to Jungian theory, children live in both the outer world of family, school, and friends and the inner world of feelings, impulses, and desires. The goal of play therapy from a Jungian perspective, then, is to help a child reach a resolution between these two opposite states and enhance her or his ego development along the way. From the Jungian frame of reference, the counselor acts as an observer while the child engages in some form of play, whether it be sand play, doll play, fantasy play, or drawing, sculpting, building. From the Jungian perspective, the counselor observes the process, paying attention to the child's representations of the outer world and the inner world and the inherent struggle between the two. Interpretations may be used with the child when it is clear that the child has the ego strength to accept the interpretations.

Adlerian Play

As opposed to the Jungian and child-centered "hands-off" approaches to play therapy, Adlerian play therapy relies on the interaction between the counselor and the child throughout the process. According to Adler, people are social beings who strive to belong. We are creative, decision-making beings who seek to enhance our own lifestyles, and we behave in a purposeful manner (Kottman & Johnson, 1993). The process of integrating Adlerian principles with play therapy involves the counselor's use of tracking, reflection of feelings, encouragement, limit setting, and exploration of the child's lifestyle. In Adlerian play therapy, the counselor is on the lookout for manifestations of the child's goals of behavior, family constellation, and early recollections. The counselor may use both observational and questioning techniques to gain insight into the child's lifestyle. To gauge family atmosphere and constellation, for example, the counselor might ask the child to "create a scene in the sand showing your family doing something together" and then, "tell me a story about this scene." The counselor's goal throughout the process is to build a tentative hypothesis about how the child views herself or himself, others, and the world. This understanding can be shared with the child to foster discussion, insight, and ultimate behavior change.

Gestalt Play

From a Gestalt perspective, the use of expressive arts in counseling helps clients to become more integrated and more aware of their total selves. The use of movement, music, clay, and art awakens all the senses in counseling and brings a greater awareness of the "total Gestalt" or the "total being" to the process (Gladding, 1998). According to Oaklander (1988), the use of imagery and tactile medium such as drawing, clay, and sand helps children and adolescents to bring up deeper feelings, express themselves in new ways, and find a pathway to mutual understanding with the counselor. The Gestalt framework encourages interaction and participation on the part of the counselor through role playing, questioning, and an active exploration of meaning and feelings. The purpose of the interaction is to help the child strengthen and nurture her or his sense of self through the encouragement of emotional expression (Oaklander, 1988).

PRACTICING WITH INTENTIONALITY AND FLEXIBILITY

Regardless of the theoretical orientation used by elementary school counselors in the use of expressive arts in counseling, it is imperative that counselors practice within the limits of their own expertise and training. The use of creative arts in counseling must be practiced with responsibility. Some potential dangers or pitfalls facing the elementary counselor include the following: practicing outside one's own comfort zone, practicing outside one's own professional limitations, not matching the intervention with the clients' needs, not using intentionality in the selection of techniques, and not showing flexibility when working with a child.

Comfort Zone

Clients, even very young clients, can be surprisingly savvy. For this reason, it is important that you, the elementary school counselor, do not try a technique or intervention that puts you far outside your own comfort zone. Just as a horse can sense an inexperienced and nervous rider on its back, so can a child sense when you are asking her or him to do something that you yourself are uncomfortable with. A good rule of thumb in using creative arts in counseling is not to ask a child to do something you would not do. There might be times a child will want you to participate in an activity or times you might need to model an expression to help the child gain comfort. If you are very uncomfortable with movement, for example, you might be caught off guard if a child asks you to dance with her or act out a scene with her. Whenever possible, it is a good idea to engage in the activities and techniques you are using with young clients. You can practice techniques and interventions with a colleague or, better yet, a supervisor. This will give you an opportunity to see what it feels like to work with a particular medium (i.e., sand, clay) and to see how the use of the medium affects you on an emotional and psychological level.

Professional Limitations

In addition to knowing your own comfort zone as an elementary counselor, it is of paramount importance to be aware of your own professional limitations. There are those who believe play therapy and art therapy techniques do not belong in the schools and should not be used by anyone without proper training (Campbell, 1993). Using a "house-tree-person" assessment technique, for example, without proper training in its use and interpretation would be unethical and unprofessional. For the professional school counselor who does not have additional training in art and play techniques, expressive arts can still play an important role in working with clients. In these cases, play should not be seen as an "add-on" program but should be infused into the guidance program. Some rules of thumb to go by in achieving this goal would include the following: (a) do not use a creative medium to directly interpret a child's feelings, meaning, or world view; (b) do not use a creative medium to make clinical diagnoses about a child; and (c) do not use a creative medium to draw conclusions about the nature of a child's problem. One of the biggest mistakes counselors who have not been trained in expressive arts therapy can make is to interpret their clients' work. Whenever possible, it is a good idea to let the clients make their own interpretations and derive their own meaning from their play. Because creativity in counseling creates an opportunity for clients to become open to their own process, counselors who stay with that process help to foster their clients' self-discovery. If a child creates an abstract figure with clay, asking the child "What does that sculpture mean to you?" or "What is that sculpture trying to say?" is more effective and more responsible than saying "That sculpture must represent the sadness you feel about your parents' divorce."

Diagnosis

While many school counselors have received training in the use of diagnosis in counseling, the practice of art therapy has developed its own specific diagnostic criteria based on types of play and art. As a school counselor, if you have concern about something a child has drawn or expressed during play, it is a good idea to consult with a trained art therapist and make a referral to an appropriate source. Again, you can use the child's meaning of her or his creation to make some tentative hypotheses and then use consultation and referral to further help the child.

Use of Intentionality

When using forms of creative expression in counseling with children, it is important to match your intervention to the child's needs. Just as you would strategically select the use of an empty-chair technique to help a child deal with an interpersonal conflict, so should you select appropriate creative mediums on the basis of the child's identified needs. Maintaining a sense of intentionality and focus with your intervention will help keep the therapeutic process from becoming "arts-and-crafts time." Some children, for example, may see counseling time as play time if the elementary counselor is not careful to create a therapeutic atmosphere conducive to change during the counseling session. It is the counselor's job to maintain a focus on desired goals and outcomes and how the use of this particular play medium—whether it be sand, clay, or art—will help the client move closer to achieving identified goals. In addition, the counselor should not lose sight of the importance of processing any experience and helping the clients to make connections between the experience and their own life.

Use of Flexibility

Just as it is important to maintain a sense of purpose and direction in using expressive arts in counseling, it is also vital that the elementary counselor maintain a sense of flexibility with young clients. The school counselor who is flexible in using expressive arts with clients grows adept at identifying preferred learning styles in clients. For example, movement may be the preferred modality for the child who learns kinesthetically; music or story telling may assist the auditory learner to express herself or himself more fully; and painting may foster the expression of feelings for the more visual child. Children often think and act outside the boxes and boundaries that adults put them in. Specific expectations for behavior are set both at home and at school. The use of creative arts in counseling sometimes requires thinking and acting outside of those structured boundaries. When children play, they often set their own rules and outcomes. They might select materials other than what one would like them to use. They might use the selected materials in ways that are contrary to one's expectations. As the school counselor, it is your role to decide what the appropriate boundaries for play will be. Whether operating from a directive or nondirective stance, boundaries are needed during counseling. Boundaries help the child to be aware of needed limits and give them a starting place within which to play. For example, the use of time frames can help to establish time boundaries with young clients. The school counselor could say, "Why don't you take 20 minutes or so to explore this?" or "You've been working for over 15 minutes, how much more time do you need?" In addition, the setting of boundaries and limitations can help the child become aware of your expectations for safety and proper use of a particular medium. For example, a counselor introducing a sand tray to a child might say, "You can play in this sand and use any of these figures in the sand in any way you want. It is important that you try to keep the sand in the tray and use the figures in the tray." This gives the child the flexibility to use the medium in different ways while also conveying some appropriate boundaries about the medium's use.

According to Axline (1969), the counselor who shows a child acceptance and an attitude of permissiveness will make more progress than one who sets rigid boundaries and does not accept and meet the child where the child is. In other words, maintaining a stance of both flexibility and intentionality is vital in the play process. As a school counselor, you must decide what your limitations are. Are you comfortable with messiness? Are you comfortable with loud noises? Are you comfortable with expressions of anger toward you and others? The answers to these questions will help to guide both your choice of creative arts materials and your counseling style. In a structured school setting, it can be difficult to think outside the constraints set for both you and your young clients. Gaining support from your colleagues and administrators, however, can help in building an effective counseling program that uses creative and expressive arts.

GAINING SCHOOL SUPPORT

The school counselor trying to infuse the use of expressive arts into his or her guidance program might face resistance from faculty, administrators, and parents. Creative approaches are often mistakenly mislabeled as frivolous, without a clear purpose, too much fun, not therapeutic, or not a good use of the counselor's time (Paisley & Young, 1998). In addition, school counselors often experience pressure from faculty, administrators, and parents to change problem behaviors and to do it expediently (Landreth, 1993). A first step in gaining school support is through education. Many critics of expressive arts counseling are simply ill informed about the potential benefits of the process. Providing administrators and teachers with a brief background regarding the research and theory behind the use of creative arts as well as some examples of how you plan to implement and use different strategies and techniques can help to break down some initial barriers. It is helpful to remind your colleagues of the rich history of the use of play in counseling in the schools.

Virtually all mental health theories speak to the value of using play and creative expression with children. In addition, many commercially available and widely used guidance programs use imagery, puppetry, and play as learning tools for enhancing self-esteem, conflict management, and greater academic achievement. For example, the program *Developing Understanding of Self and Others* uses music, puppets, and role playing with elementary-age children. The program was based on Adlerian principles of counseling and learning and was developed by Dinkmeyer to help children build social skills and enhance self-awareness (Campbell, 1993). Not all creative arts interventions need be lengthy to be effective. Inviting faculty and administrators to visit your play room and sharing with them some examples of therapeutic techniques used to deal with particular problems may help to bolster support for your program.

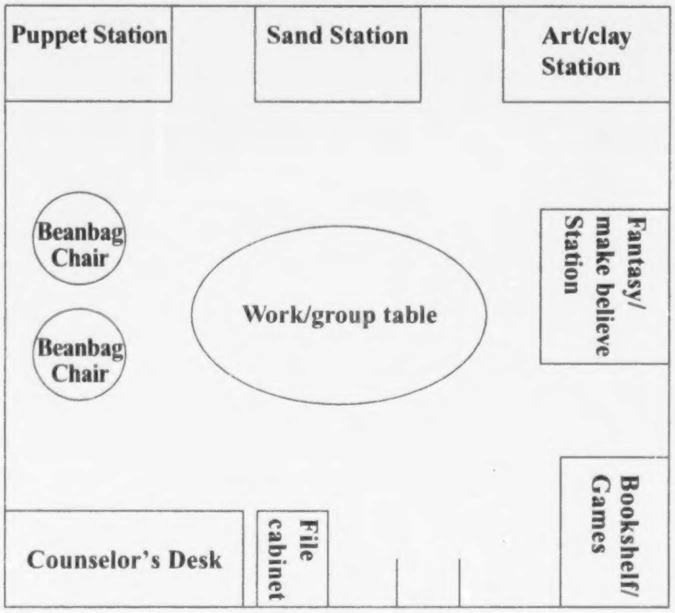
THE THERAPEUTIC ENVIRONMENT

In addition to the support needed to generate referrals, an elementary school counselor will also need support to adequately stock the counseling room with different creative arts materials. As with choosing interventions and activities with intentionality, it is equally important to select play materials and creative mediums that have been shown to be therapeutic in working with children. According to Homeyer and Sweeney (1998), it is important in play therapy to provide the child with a diverse "vocabulary" of toys and materials with which to express herself or himself. A well-stocked play room need not be expensive or cluttered. Given that many school counselors have limited space for therapeutic interventions, it is important the play room be arranged in such a way to make materials readily accessible while leaving room for the use of play materials. One recommendation by C. Stanley and C. Reynolds (personal communication, October 16, 1998) is to set up play stations in different parts of the counseling room. This allows children to immediately see what is available to them while also allowing the counselor to organize the space in such a way to maximize interaction with different play media (see Figure 5.1). Described below are important elements for each station as well as recommendations for setup of each station to maximize space and involvement.

Puppet Station

Because animal puppets are often used by children to describe different emotions (Landreth, 1993), it is a good idea to have strong, symbolic representations. For example, sharks, alligators, and dinosaurs can all be used to symbolize anger and aggression. A turtle can be bashful and shy, a kitten can be timid and trusting, and an owl can be wise and thoughtful. In addition to animal puppets, ethnically diverse

Figure 5.1 Play stations in a school counselor's room.



people puppets are also valuable to have in the puppet station. These puppets are often used by children to act out family, peer, and school situations. Finally, fantasy puppets such as witches, wizards, and dragons can be used to uncover fantasies, wishes, and dreams. It is helpful to have different sizes, textures, and shapes of puppets. Size, for example, might be used to describe a balance of power in a significant relationship, and a "rough"-feeling puppet might be selected to represent a "rough" character in real life. Unfortunately, man-made puppets can be expensive. Counselors can look for bargains at yard sales and in education catalogs, and they can request money through donations and the school guidance budget. Even still, it will take a while to acquire a good representative sample of valuable puppets.

Another option for puppet play is to have young clients make their own puppets out of readily available materials. Not only is this tactic less expensive than purchasing man-made puppets, but it may also allow for more creativity and freedom of expression on the part of the child. The process of making a puppet can lead to creative thinking, use of imagination, freedom from boundaries, building a positive self-image, and enhancing manual dexterity and manipulative skills.

The puppet station of a counseling room can consist merely of a coat rack or two small shelves on which to house man-made puppets. A medium-sized plastic container can be tucked under the shelves containing materials such as pipe cleaners, paper plates, paper bags, envelopes, paper towel rolls, Popsicle sticks, paints, markers, glue, glitter, feathers, buttons for eyes, felt, and pom-poms for puppet making.

Sand Station

Standard sand trays can be bought by retailers and manufacturers. These trays are usually made of wood or plastic with the inside painted blue on the bottom and sides to simulate sky and water. The standard tray is typically rectangular-shaped and measures 30 × 20 × 3 inches (76.2 × 50.8 × 7.6 cm; Homeyer & Sweeney, 1998). As standard sand trays can be expensive, counselors can create their own using a transparent storage or sweater box with a blue lid. The lid can be placed under the tray during play to simulate water and can be placed on the tray when not in use to minimize spills and messes. The box should approximate the above dimensions, as the size of the tray helps to facilitate ease of use and the ability to divide the sand tray scene into sections.

The recommended sand for a tray is play sand, which can be purchased from lumber yards or home improvement stores. This sand is relatively inexpensive, sterilized, free of dust, and can be used successfully whether wet or dry. It is a good idea to avoid use of mixing and building sand, because although it is generally cheaper than play sand, it tends to be dusty and coarse (Homeyer & Sweeney, 1998). Some counselors choose to use a medium other than sand, such as rice and corn meal, to cut down on the potential for messes.

In addition to the tray and sand, elementary school counselors will need to begin building a collection of tools and miniatures to be used in the sand tray. Tools such as trowels, rakes, and small shovels can be used to smooth, build, and bury in the sand. Miniature figures are the words and symbols of the child client's nonverbal communication in the sand (Homeyer & Sweeney, 1998). As with the selection of items for the play room, the selection of miniatures should be carried out with intentionality. A good rule of thumb is to make available enough miniatures from various categories that enables the children to not feel constricted in their choice of items. Miniatures do not need to be the same size. It is actually helpful to provide items that vary in size, shape, texture, appearance, and meaning. The miniatures should be representative of the client's world (Homeyer & Sweeney, 1998). Table 5.1 describes categories of miniatures as well as types within each category.

An easy and space-saving way for counselors to display the sand tray station is to place the sand tray on a small television cart while arranging the miniatures on the shelves below the cart. If there are not enough shelves or if there is not enough room on the shelves for the miniatures, small, transparent shoeboxes can be used to place the miniatures in. Whether shelved or boxed, miniatures should be arranged and labeled by category for easy access and use.

Art/Clay Station

According to Gil (1994), child clients show their experience of their world through art. The process of drawing and creating is healing in and of itself and encourages self-expression, self-perception, and group interactions. Because different children will be drawn to different media, it is important to provide clients with a variety of tools for self-expression. Younger children are often more comfortable with paints and crayons, whereas older children might be more likely to use pastels and colored pencils. Regardless of the media used, tactile interactions involving drawing and clay can help children to bring up deeper feelings, express themselves in new ways, and find a pathway to mutual understanding with the counselor (Oaklander, 1988).

In the elementary school counselor's room, it is important to be realistic in terms of the types of art media used. Finger paints, for example, while a wonderful form of creative expression for younger children, may be difficult to maintain if there are no easy forms of cleanup nearby. Whatever art materials are used can be housed in small, transparent shoeboxes and placed on shelves or stacked in a corner. An easel

Table 5.1 Miniature Items for Sand Tray

People	Animals	Buildings	Vehicles	Barriers/ Barricades	Natural Items	Fantasy Items	Spiritual/ Religious Symbols	Vegetation/ Landscape Items	Other Items
Family groups, occupations and hobbies, different stages in life and ethnicities	Prehistoric animals, zoo animals, domestic animals, birds, insects, sea life	Dwellings, schools, churches, businesses, skyscrapers, hospitals, castles, and forts	Cars, rescue and emergency vehicles, trucks, tractors, buses, bulldozers, airplanes, helicopters, and rocket ships	Fences, gates, construction barricades, traffic signs, and railroad tracks	Sea shells, dried flowers, twigs, and rocks	Witches, fairy godmothers, dragons, unicorns, wizards, monsters, fairy-tale figures, and cartoon figures	Priests, pastors, rabbis, medicine men, Buddha, Catholic symbols, crucifixes, nativity scenes, Bibles, and ancient gods	Trees, bushes, flowers, hedges, caves, tunnels, lakes, volcanoes, sun, moon, stars, rainbows, and globes	Furniture, dishes, utensils, beer and wine bottles, empty pill bottles, food, fruit, telephones, mailboxes, windmills, benches, and garbage cans

with large paper can be folded up and put away when not in use, and it provides young clients with an easy way to draw and paint. A couple of aprons or smocks are helpful to have in stock, as well as a supply of paper towels and newspapers to help keep any mess to a minimum.

Although it is often seen as "too messy," clay is an important medium for any play room. Clay provides a good link between verbal and nonverbal expression, and it is good to use with clients who might be too self-conscious to draw (Oaklander, 1988). There are several types of clay that are available for use that can be easily maintained and stored. Regular sculpting clay is inexpensive, easy to manipulate, and air-dries so it can be painted and decorated. Synthetic clay costs slightly more, but it is lightweight, not messy, and can be used again and again. Even Play-Doh can be used, although it is less versatile and tends to dry up quickly. Sculpting clay should be wrapped in plastic and stored in an air-tight container until used. If it is too hard, a small amount of water can be added to bring back its pliability. It is helpful to have on hand some small sculpting tools. Kitchen utensils such as rolling pins, pizza cutters, and wooden mallets can add versatility to the client's interaction with the clay. All of these materials can be kept in small, transparent shoeboxes and stored with the other art materials. It is helpful to have in the room a small table or desk that can be used for sculpting and manipulating clay.

Fantasy/Make-Believe Station

The fantasy/make-believe station can consist of a footlocker or trunk filled with different dress-up and play items. Halloween costumes and masks (i.e., fairy princess, fireman, policeman, monster) can provide clients with the tools to act out different roles. Other items such as magic wands, rubber knives, toy handcuffs, telephones, doctor kits, cotton rope, baby dolls, pacifiers, baby bottles, and costume jewelry are toys that can encourage a wide range of expression (Landreth, 1993). Some items may be seen as controversial or inappropriate depending on the school setting. Some administrators, for example, may frown on the inclusion of toy weapons, toy handcuffs, or anatomically correct dolls as tools in the play room. Because it is imperative for an elementary school counselor to have administrative support when putting together the creative materials, the counselor should convey to the administrator the importance of including toys and materials that allow for acting out and aggressive release (Paisley & Young, 1998). These more controversial items should be used carefully and only to facilitate expression in a safe and controlled environment.

Books and Games Station

If there is a bookcase in the counseling room, different age-appropriate books and games can be placed on it at eye level for the young clients. Most elementary school counselors have a solid collection of books that convey different messages about grief/loss, divorce, getting along with friends, self-esteem, and so on. To bring a creative twist to the use of books in counseling, counselors can have children "act out" different parts of a book and change different outcomes in a book. Storytelling can be a powerful way to help children uncover the metaphor and meaning in their stories. According to Freeman, Epston, and Lobovits (1997), storytelling, or narrative therapy, helps clients to separate themselves from their problems through the process of externalization. This process relieves the pressure of blame and defensiveness. Stories may come from a preexisting source, such as a book, or may be narrated by the client or the counselor. Providing a comfortable space for this process, such as a beanbag chair or soft area rug, can help to set the tone for the interaction.

Playing board games can be a valuable tool for social learning. Concepts such as taking turns, not cheating, winning, and losing can all be explored through game playing (Oaklander, 1988). Board games can also help facilitate communication with an individual client who may not feel like talking, as well as with a group in the early stages of joining. Games can be used as a way to relax and prepare to go back to class after a child has been working hard at a particular problem and may feel emotionally drained. Simple games such as Chinese checkers, Candyland, Ker-plunk, Jenga, and Pick-Up-Sticks are generally better to use than more complicated games such as Monopoly or chess (Oaklander, 1988). In addition to mainstream games, therapeutically oriented games focus on particular issues (i.e., anger management, self-esteem) and can be purchased through education catalogs. A good game to own is The Ungame, which can be used to facilitate communication and discuss feelings individually or in a group.

Expressive Arts Resource Bag

The previous sections have discussed an "ideal" setup for an elementary school counselor's expressive arts room. Although advantageous, a fully equipped expressive arts room with multiple stations is not essential for children to express themselves (Landreth, 1993). Of course, depending on the available space and resources, the counselor may need to scale down expressive arts resources for his or her counseling practice. If the counselor is a traveling elementary school counselor, has a very small space, or shares counseling space with others, he or she may want to put together an expressive arts resource bag (Landreth, 1993). If the counselor has materials ready to travel, he or she can conduct counseling sessions almost anywhere. Filling a laundry bag or duffel bag with the following materials will give elementary school counselors the tools necessary to help children express and explore their feelings, needs, and experiences. As suggested by Landreth (1993), resource bag materials might include the following:

- drawing materials, such as a small box of crayons or markers as well as a small- to medium-size sketch pad
- miniature people/dolls
- an aggressive hand puppet
- pocket "Ungame"
- toy soldiers
- Lone Ranger mask
- toy telephone
- koosh or nerf ball
- clay or Play-Doh
- blunt scissors and tape
- 2 to 3 magazines
- baby doll and baby bottle
- toy handcuffs
- doll house furniture
- play mat
- small airplane and car

- costume jewelry
- an inflatable punching bag

TECHNIQUES AND INTERVENTIONS

Once the elementary school counselor has obtained support from the school community as well as the resources to begin using expressive arts in counseling, it is time to develop some strategies and techniques for counseling. As stated earlier, it is of vital importance that counselors practice within their professional limitations and always act in the client's best interest. It is recommended that counselors seek out any available training for use with different expressive arts media. In addition, investing some of the guidance money into books that discuss various approaches and techniques will help the elementary counselor to build a successful repertoire of expressive arts counseling techniques. Recommended resource organizations and materials that can help the counselor to develop the necessary skills to use expressive arts in the counseling practice are listed at the end of the chapter. One approach to using a particular counseling medium, sand tray, with young clients is presented in the following section.

Sand Tray Technique

There is much information about the use of sand tray in a variety of therapeutic settings (see the Appendix). The use of sand tray was developed by Margaret Lowenfeld in the 1920s. Dora Kalff, a Swiss Jungian analyst, adopted this technique as a therapeutic intervention with children and adults. Kalff paid attention to the use of symbols, representations of the ego, and the unconscious when working with clients (Carmichael, 1994). In addition to symbolic interpretation, the sand tray has also been used therapeutically from a client-centered/nondirective perspective. Eliana Gil, a play and family therapist, has used the technique with posttrauma clients in which she essentially "gets out of the way" and allows her clients to use the medium to reexperience and ultimately resolve the trauma (E. Gil, personal communication, October 16, 1998).

In a school setting where lack of training and time might limit the elementary school counselor in the use of interpretation and long-term treatment, the Gestalt approach to the sand tray seems to be particularly beneficial. From the Gestalt perspective, the process is more interactive and short term, and it leaves most of the interpretation and processing of the experience up to the client. Oaklander (1988) described the use of sand tray in her book, *Windows to Our Children*, as one that can be altered to meet each child's needs: "Sometimes I ask the children to choose any items they wish for making a 'scene' or 'picture' in the sand, and at other times *I* choose the pieces in order to focus in on a particular situation" (p. 166).

Sand tray is an appropriate medium for all age groups and developmental levels. It is helpful with both nonverbal clients who may need another outlet of expression and overly verbal clients who may need to focus on something external. Sand tray sessions can be completed in short amounts of time and can be continued, if needed, at later times.

Every aspect of the child's approach to the sand can be telling. Some children may feel tentative and dislike the texture of the sand, whereas others will bury their arms up to their elbows and aggressively manipulate the sand. The selection of miniatures is also of key importance. It is helpful to have the miniatures displayed in such a way that they are easily accessible and can be seen clearly by category. If the elementary counselor is conducting a nondirective sand tray session, the counselor can begin the sand tray session by asking the child to select any figures the child would like to make a scene in the sand. It is often helpful to say something like, "Just pick whatever figures you are drawn to. Sometimes it might mean you don't actually like the figure, but you are drawn to it anyway."

The next step is to ask the child to create a scene in the sand using the items they have selected. According to their age and developmental level, children tend to approach this task in different ways. Young children will often engage in the process as an ongoing experience, changing their story, moving the figures, even asking the counselor to get involved. In this case, the elementary counselor may act as more of a participant by playing with the child in the sand and tracking the child's behavior. Older children and adolescents tend to create a scene and let the counselor know when they are finished. Then time is spent processing the experience and having the client describe the scene (Homeyer & Sweeney, 1998). Using a more directive approach, counselors may ask clients to depict particular events and scenes in the tray. If, for example, the counselor knows that Andrea is having a difficult time dealing with her parents' recent separation, the counselor may ask her to do a "before and after" tray in which one side of the tray shows the family before the separation, and the other side shows the family after the separation. Whether the counselor's approach is directive or nondirective, it is important to leave enough time for processing the experience with the client.

Some processing question might include, "Talk to me about what you've made. What do you see? Tell me a story about what you've created. What do you notice about this figure? Tell me about how she is standing? What does she mean to you? Have this figure talk to this other figure. Have this figure talk to me. Tell me how you feel as this figure. Tell me what you want as this figure. Tell me what's going to happen next. If you could change anything about this scene, what would it be?" It is helpful during processing to stay in the client's metaphor. For example, if the client uses a figure and names the figure "Donny the Dino," it is important that, as the counselor, you refer to the figure in the same way. You can ask the client to talk to you as Donny the Dino, you can ask Donny the Dino how he feels, or you can ask Donny the Dino to talk to other figures in the tray.

In addition to processing the experience with the child, you as the counselor might make some tentative interpretations that you then verify with the client. For example, if a client creates a scene in which all the figures are crowded in one corner of the tray, you might say, "That looks very crowded. Do you ever feel crowded like that at home?" (Oaklander, 1988). It can also be helpful to share with the child what you notice about the scene and their process. For example, you might say, "I noticed that you seemed to have some difficulty in deciding which objects to use. Are there other times it's hard for you to decide what to do?"

A final step in the sand tray process is to ask the child to give you a title of the scene and to preserve the tray. If possible, taking a Polaroid picture of the completed scene can serve to honor the client's good work and can act as a reminder of what was created in future sessions. A client can become very absorbed in the process of creating a sand tray and can feel very personal about her or his creation. For this reason, it is very important to not dismantle a client's tray in front of the client. It is better to wait until the client has left or to ask the client if the client would like to put the miniatures back himself or herself instead of taking apart the client's creation in front of him or her (Homeyer & Sweeney, 1998).

SUMMARY

It is clear that one chapter does not provide the space necessary to adequately discuss the use of expressive arts in elementary school counseling. For those counselors interested in this process, I recommend seeking out additional training and resources. As creative expression and play is often the window into the client's worlds, it is essential that elementary school counselors find ways to tap into these creative resources. The process of expressive arts counseling is both rewarding and useful. Counselors who have integrated expressive media into their counseling repertoire find it difficult to revert back to "talk therapy." The process of play honors children's forms of communication and expression while creating a safe and fun way to explore issues and problems in a school setting.

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WEB SITES OF INTEREST

http://www.counseling.org (American Counseling Association homepage)

http://www.sirius.com/~a4pt/profreg.htm (Association for Play Therapy)

http://www.schoolcounselor.org (American School Counseling Association homepage)

http://www.sandplay.org (Society for Sandplay Therapy homepage)

Chapter 6

USING GROUP REWARDS TO INFLUENCE PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS: THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR AS CONSULTANT AND COORDINATOR

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CONTINGENCY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS, INVOLVING THE USE of consequences (i.e., rewards and punishments) to influence student behavior (Bootzin & Acocella, 1984), are underused in most educational environments (Englemann, 1991). This is likely due to a lack of training and misconceptions about the philosophy and potential negative side effects of such programs (Pumroy & McIntire, 1991). Two of the most common misconceptions about contingency management programs is that they are used only to eradicate inappropriate behavior and that they are controlling rather than empowering (O'Leary, Poulos, & Devine, 1972). When used correctly, however, group reward programs fit within humanistic ideology and goals (C. S. Cashwell, Skinner, Dunn, & Lewis, 1998; Watson, 1994), promote prosocial behavior and an appreciation of diversity (T. H. Cashwell & Skinner, 1999; Skinner, Cashwell, & Skinner, 2000), and may be an important aspect of a comprehensive and developmental school counseling program, affecting both behavioral and academic progress among students.

There are numerous reasons why group contingencies are preferred over individual contingencies for classroom management. Individual contingency programs are specialized in the sense that each student has her or his own set of target behaviors, criteria, and rewards. Limited resources and time constraints, however, often make it difficult to implement these types of programs (Hall, 1991; Hayes, 1976; Heller & Monahan, 1977; Litow & Pumroy, 1975; Martens & Witt, 1988; Parcel, & Gutkin, 1983). Furthermore, individual contingencies tend to foster competition (Hayes, 1976). Conversely, group contingencies are easier for school counselors and teachers to manage and, if implemented correctly, promote collaboration and peer support rather than competition in the classroom (Gresham & Gresham, 1982)

Our purpose in this chapter is to discuss, within a humanistic framework, three types of group reward programs (dependent, independent, and interdependent) commonly used in schools, emphasizing the strengths and limitations of each. With a solid understanding of the potential and negative side-effects of the three types of group reward programs, professional school counselors may better facilitate group processes and serve as more effective consultants with teachers regarding classroom management.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature is organized around the three types of group reward programs: independent, dependent, and interdependent. Interdependent group reward programs are most consistent with a humanistic philosophy (Slavin, 1987) and are emphasized here. After considering the limitations of independent and dependent group reward programs, we provide specific recommendations for implementing interdependent group reward programs.

Independent Group Rewards

Most frequently used in educational settings (likely because of a lack of knowledge concerning alternatives), independent group reward programs involve rewarding each student individually with the same reward based on meeting the same criteria (Watson, 1994). These classroom management programs are considered independent because only students who meet the targeted criteria receive access to the reward. Independent consequences are established for each child on the basis of her or his behavior. For example, a teacher may implement a program whereby all students who do not fight during a 4-week interval will be allowed to participate in a field trip.

One of the advantages of this system is that there is only one contingency that teachers must oversee. When consequences for specified behaviors are the same for all students, this makes the system less complicated for the teacher. Because everyone is judged by the same standards, this system is seen as the most equitable (C. S. Cashwell et al., 1998; Turco & Elliott, 1990). One of the disadvantages of an independent group contingency system is that it encourages competition, whether it be in place for behavioral or academic purposes (Gresham & Gresham, 1982; Slavin, 1987). Because of the intrinsic competition in this system, students may focus on negative behaviors of their peers, and the incidence of "tattling" may increase (C. S. Cashwell et al., 1998). Another disadvantage of an independent group contingency program is that the types of reinforcements that teachers have to choose from are restricted. Inevitably, some students will obtain rewards and others will not, possibly creating a class system of "haves" and "have-nots." The have-nots may resent the fact that they did not earn reinforcement and may feel no motivation to observe the target behaviors (Skinner, Cashwell, & Dunn, 1996). This creation of class systems actually may increase the incidence of problem behavior (C. S. Cashwell & Vacc, 1996). In the above example in which a 4-week "no fighting" goal was established with the reward of a field trip, two students who get into a fight in the first week have a 3-week period during which their motivation to engage in positive behavior may be substantially diminished. Relatedly, the potential for student sabotage of this reward system exists. For example, a student who gets into a fight and loses the opportunity for the field trip may later start a fight with another student in an effort to sabotage the second student's access to the reward.

Dependent Group Rewards

When using a dependent group reward system, the total class attains the reinforcement contingent upon the performance of a selected individual. That is, the class receives the reward dependent on the performance of one individual. For example, a class may receive extra play time if a targeted student performs well on a test or meets preestablished behavior criteria (e.g., stays in seat).

The biggest advantage of a dependent group contingency system is its usefulness in aiding a behavior change in an individual by means of peer influence, consistent with the cooperative learning goals of influencing a greater sense of caring, helpfulness, and commitment to others (Sweeney & Carruthers, 1996) and fostering social and emotional skills necessary for conflict resolution (Lardino-Harding, 1994; Nattiv, Render, Lemire, & Render, 1989). Group members may help the selected individual realize the target behaviors so that the entire class can be rewarded. A student who receives little peer support under typical circumstances may receive encouragement and support from her or his peers (Carden-Smith & Fowler, 1984; Hayes, 1976; Litow & Pumroy, 1975). Researchers have found that peer support may help increase on-task academic behavior (Kohler, Schwartz, Cross, & Fowler, 1989) and facilitate the mainstreaming of children with behavioral problems (Carden-Smith & Fowler, 1984; DuPaul, McGoey, & Yugar, 1997; Fowler, 1986).

Dependent group reward programs, however, have some potentially serious disadvantages. Although positive peer interactions may be enhanced as a result of targeting one individual, opposing reactions may occur as well. This feedback is especially likely in classrooms in which negative interactions are already commonplace. Therefore, dependent group contingencies may place too much pressure on a student who is unable or has difficulty performing the target behaviors (Hayes, 1976). Overall classroom behavior is least affected by this type of group contingency (Litow & Pumroy, 1975), and teachers rate this form of group contingency as unacceptable (Elliot, Turco, & Gresham, 1987).

Interdependent Group Rewards

In an interdependent reward system, the behavior of the whole class is taken into consideration when dispensing rewards (Gresham & Gresham, 1982; Litow & Pumroy, 1975). A reward system such as "highs" (e.g., someone achieves a score of 95 or better on a test), "lows" (e.g., there are fewer than two fights in a classroom over a 4-week period), or "averages" (e.g., class average on a particular test is 85) may be used to determine whether a reward has been achieved.

Although less frequently used in educational systems, interdependent group contingency systems have several advantages. Such systems are more practical cost-wise, take less time to implement (Malone & McLaughlin, 1997), are easier to administer (Lew, Mesch, Johnson, & Johnson, 1986; Pigott, Fantuzzo, & Clement, 1986; Salend, Reynolds, & Coyle, 1989; Turco & Elliott, 1990), and are considered fair and acceptable by students (Goldberg & Shapiro, 1995) and teachers (Elliott et al., 1987). The system is more time efficient because it is easier for the teacher to keep records (Gresham & Gresham, 1982) and the whole class receives the same reward (Axelrod, 1973). Because the entire class receives the same reward, the selection pool of rewards increases. The problem created by the independent group contingency system of a population of haves and have-nots is not a factor with the interdependent group contingency system (Skinner et al., 1996). Collaboration and constructive interactions among students increase with this type of system as students attend to the efforts of their peers and reinforce efforts that help the group attain a goal (Gamble & Strain, 1979; Hayes, 1976; Lew et al., 1986; Salend et al., 1989; Slavin, 1987; Speltz, Shimamura, & McReynolds, 1982). Although empirical research on the efficacy of different types of reward systems remains somewhat mixed, when researchers find differences in effectiveness, typically the findings favor the use of interdependent group reward programs (Litow & Pumroy, 1975).

The main disadvantage to the interdependent group contingency system is that students who do not participate in earning the reward still receive the reward, because reinforcement is based on the total class behavior (Hayes, 1976). For example, if a class average of 85 on a test is used as the criterion and this class average is met, even students who score below this average are afforded the reward. This may be particularly troubling to some teachers who see this as unfair. However, Skinner et al. (1996) argued that this is a positive aspect of interdependent systems as it may make school more enjoyable for students and increase motivation for those students who typically would not receive reinforcers if an independent group reward program were in place. As one example, Lew et al. (1986) found that the use of interdependent group contingencies was successful in encouraging socially withdrawn and isolated students to become more involved with their peers.

There are some additional limitations to interdependent contingency systems. For example, similar to the dependent reward system, when an interdependent system is used and a group is told they have not earned a reward, this may occasion negative reactions, particularly among those students who were performing above the established criterion level. For example, if a class average of 85 on a test is used as a criterion, those students who earned a grade higher than an 85 may have negative reactions when told that the class average was below 85 and that the class will not have access to the reinforcer. Furthermore, these students may vent their frustrations on students who they know lowered the group average. Such experiences likely create a negative classroom environment. Through a process of randomization, however, it is possible to reduce these problems by randomizing program components to create a more humanistic process and environment (C. S. Cashwell et al., 1998; Skinner & Watson, 1995).

Randomizing Program Components

In a traditional contingency system, target behaviors, criteria, and rewards are all established a priori. However, the disadvantages previously mentioned may be minimized by randomizing the program components. Skinner and Watson (1995) described a process whereby various aspects of the contingency system could be randomized with minimal time commitment and simple materials. Counselors or teachers can use two paper bags labeled *rewards* and *target behaviors and criteria*. As a class activity, the class works with the teacher (or school counselor) to develop group rewards, including tangible rewards and group activities. On the basis of the needs of each classroom, the teacher (or counselor) develops the target behaviors and criteria. Examples might include "85% class average on spelling test," "95% of students complete homework assignment," or "fewer than two fights within the classroom in a 2-week period." Targeted behaviors should reflect the predominant needs of each classroom. Criteria levels should be set at a level that is reasonably attainable by the class. It is best to err on the side of setting criteria levels too low (success breeds success) and then raising the criteria over time. Initially setting the criteria level too high could frustrate students and negatively affect the classroom environment.

The randomization process creates a system in which students are always working under the influence of the reward program. The teacher (or school counselor) periodically draws a slip from the sack labeled *target behavior and criteria* and determines if the class has met the specific criterion. If, and *only* if, students have met the criterion is the reward slip drawn. If the class fails to meet the criterion, no reward is drawn, and the *target behavior and criteria* slip is returned to the sack. Students seeing that the slip was returned to the sack may be influenced to work toward meeting this criterion in the future. The randomization process reduces the likelihood of student sabotage and negative outcomes when criteria are not met. Because students do not know a priori the particular reward for which they are working, they will not sabotage if it is a reward they do not like. Also, the likelihood of strong negative reactions from students when not receiving rewards that are particularly powerful for them is reduced. In some instances, teachers (or counselors) may choose to "rig" the system to reinforce certain behaviors. For example, if a class has reduced aggressive behavior over a time period, the teacher may "pretend" that the slip he or she has drawn says, "no fights for 2 weeks" and proceed to draw a reward slip. Rigging the system in this way may be helpful to reinforce particularly salient behavioral changes or if the group has not received a reward for a time period and is getting frustrated with the contingency system because of this. The system should never be rigged to avoid giving rewards to students.

Students may be reminded of the contingency system by keeping the sacks on the teacher's desk in plain view, posting potential rewards on a classroom bulletin board, or classroom activities to add to the *rewards* bag and adjust the target behaviors and criteria. These reminders will make the program more effective and salient (C. S. Cashwell et al., 1998; Nelson & Hayes, 1981). Also, it may be useful to randomize the timing of the drawings as well as randomize the target behaviors, criteria, and rewards. In this way, students may be less likely to misbehave as a result of not earning a reward if they are aware that another drawing may be imminent.

In summary, then, school counselors may play a key role in fostering a positive classroom and school environment by helping teachers to encourage prosocial and cooperative behaviors among students by systematically and intentionally selecting contingency systems. For example, group contingencies should be used only with reward-based programs. Using group contingencies with negative consequences (i.e., punishment) typically is considered unfair by students and may occasion many problems in the classroom. In cases in which negative consequences are deemed necessary, individual contingencies should be used rather than group contingencies.

Similarly, developmental issues should be a part of the decision-making process around the establishment of contingency systems. For example, elementary school-age children likely will respond most favorably to rewards that can be given immediately, whereas middle school and high school students may respond more favorably to more potent rewards, even if the access to these rewards must be delayed. Similarly, younger students (elementary grades) may be overwhelmed if too many target behaviors are identified. Thus, it is essential to target few behaviors initially for younger students. As developmentally appropriate, older students may be able to respond to multiple targeted behaviors. With all age groups, as the contingency system "takes hold," additional target behaviors can be added and, for younger students, delayed rewards can be added to teach students to sustain effort over time without immediate gratification.

Finally, an important consideration is whether the reward should be based on an achieved outcome or on effort. Typically, individual contingencies and independent contingencies are based on each student's outcome. That is, a student achieves a preestablished goal and has access to a reinforcer. Those students who are not capable of achieving the preestablished criteria may give up and not work to improve their work as they perceive that achieving the reward is not within their power. However, if a teacher uses class averages in implementing an interdependent group contingency system, such a system rewards the effort of each student. For example, if a classroom teacher establishes a criterion of an average grade of 85 on a spelling exam, the student who raises her or his grade from a 70 to a 75 does just as much to help the group as the student who raises her or his grade from a 90 to a 95. Helping children to understand how their effort contributes to the group goal may decrease the occasion of the giving-up phenomenon experienced with individual or independent group contingencies.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL-BASED PRACTICE

Although certain aspects of the school environment (e.g., grading) likely will remain based on individual contingencies, counselors play a key role in facilitating the effective use of group contingencies throughout the school environment. Many educators are unaware of the range of possibilities for using group contingencies and rely primarily on individual contingencies and independent group contingencies (Watson, 1994). The school counselor may play a vital role in the establishment and maintenance of group contingencies within the school. The counselor has multiple roles in which he or she may impact the use of contingencies, including counseling, consultation, and coordination.

Counseling

In the counseling role, school counselors may influence the school and classroom environment through the use of contingency systems. In setting up small-group counseling experiences, counselors may choose to use interdependent group contingencies to increase supportive behavior and cooperation within the group. The target behaviors and criteria may be altered to fit the needs of each group. For example, a school counselor who is facilitating a group for children of divorce may emphasize between-sessions tasks and in-session disclosure. Target behaviors and criteria may include the following: "At least four of the six group members completed their between-sessions task" or "All group members talked about themselves in today's session." Randomizing the selection of criteria and awards may minimize the aforementioned problems with using interdependent contingencies.

The school counselor may use contingency systems to help clients being seen in individual counseling by advocating for students with teachers. This differs from the consulting role in which counselors work with teachers to influence overall classroom environment. In the advocacy role, the counselor works with the teacher to modify current contingency systems that may be having a deleterious effect on a particular student. The most common example is a student who comes into the counselor's office saying, "Why should I try? I can't do good enough to go on the trip anyway. I never get the reward." In this instance, some type of independent contingency (the most common type of contingency used by teachers) is being used and the student is becoming frustrated at her or his consistent inability to meet the specified criterion. In this instance, the counselor might advocate for the student by helping the teacher set up an interdependent contingency that might afford the student more success and enhance her or his effort in the classroom.

Consultation

The school counselor as consultant may be the most important of the three roles in establishing healthy contingency systems within the school. Because teachers often are only aware of independent contingencies (e.g., grades) and dependent contingencies (e.g., setting up a common criteria and reward for all students), school counselors may influence the use of interdependent contingency systems within the school by providing in-service training to teachers. Furthermore, consultation with individual teachers around classroom management provides a solid opportunity for the school counselor to co-create with the teacher a contingency system that will facilitate cooperative efforts and increase prosocial behavior within the classroom. The school counselor must demonstrate patience and perseverance in working with teachers who are frustrated by disruptive behavior of students or who may have "done things a certain way" for many years. Relatedly, helping school administrators (i.e., principals) understand the potential impact of using interdependent contingency systems may provide teachers with additional support necessary to implement effective interdependent contingency systems.

Finally, school counselors provide important consultation with parents or guardians of students. Although the establishment of group contingencies in the home may not be feasible (unless there are multiple children in the home near the same age), school counselors play an important role in helping parents establish contingencies and understand how antecedent conditions and consequences influence the behavior of the child. The first, and perhaps the greatest, challenge is in forming an alliance with the parent or guardian such that the work is framed as "us against the behavior problem" rather than "me against you" or "the child and I against you." Failure to create such a working alliance with the parent or guardian may create resistance and doom the consultation to failure. One idea from this chapter that may be useful in parent consultation is the value and effectiveness of reinforcing effort rather than ability (i.e., successful outcome). This focus on effort may increase the intrinsic motivation of children rather than influencing children to work to please others and seek extrinsic motivation for their work (Hitz & Driscoll, 1988; Koestner, Zuckerman, & Koestner, 1989; Mueller & Dweck, 1998).

Coordination

Related to contingency systems in the school, perhaps the greatest challenge facing the school counselor is one of coordination and consistency between teachers and classrooms. A student who moves from a classroom in which primarily independent group contingencies are in place to a classroom in which primarily interdependent group contingencies are in place may become confused and frustrated by these transitions. While each classroom should have autonomy and work to meet the unique needs of students in that classroom, working to create a school atmosphere and climate rather than fragmented procedures across classrooms may prove beneficial. Again, the role of in-service training for teachers and administrators seems particularly important to influence some consistency across classrooms. If school administrators see the value of using interdependent contingencies to foster prosocial behavior and cooperative learning, their influence may help as well.

SUMMARY

Creating an atmosphere of cooperation and success is key to a conducive learning environment. Establishing such a climate in the schools requires the coordinated effort of all school personnel. The school counselor can play a central role in coordinating this effort by serving in the roles of counselor, consultant, and coordinator. As school personnel establish healthy contingency systems in the school, students are influenced to maximize academic success and to function as good citizens in the school environment. Led by the coordinating efforts of the school counselor, school faculty and staff can serve as role models as they work together to enhance the school climate through the establishment and maintenance of healthy contingency systems.

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Chapter 7

CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Judith Emmett and Debra Preston

IT IS THE END OF THE month and the director of elementary school counselors in New Millennium School District is reviewing the time and task logs of her counselors. She is mandated by her school board to document the time spent by elementary counselors doing career development. All counselors report many hours spent working with individuals and groups of children dealing with life stressors or crises, as well as time spent consulting with teachers and parents. She notes that many counselors report developing specific programs to help students learn anger management and assertive communication skills. Several counselors report programs to help parents assist their children with time-management and study skills. Two counselors report administering interest inventories to fifth- and sixth-grade classrooms. Other counselors report addressing a business persons' luncheon, arranging service-learning opportunities for gifted students, and consulting with the school librarian about future book orders. Which of these activities should the guidance director include in her report on the elementary school counselors' involvement in career development? Take a moment to note which activities you would include. After reading this chapter, see if you have modified your response.

This chapter describes the changing nature of work in a global society and discusses appropriate career development for elementary students on the basis of their developmental needs and the cultural diversity of today's students. It outlines the standards for career development for elementary students developed by the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC, 1989), the national school-to-work initiative (School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994), and the

American School Counselor Association (ASCA, 1997). It presents a selected review of recent literature on career development and elementary students.

The chapter outlines in some detail the responsibility that elementary school counselors have to (a) assess the career development needs of students in their schools; (b) prepare, implement, and evaluate career development curriculum and programs; and (c) involve the whole community in the career development of its students. Finally, it discusses some promising new ways to look at career and career development that may be useful to elementary school counselors. Overall, this chapter describes the attitudes, knowledge, and skills for career development needed by elementary school counselors, including how to think about career development for elementary students and how to go about doing it.

THE CHANGING NATURE OF WORK AND THE WORKFORCE

Most adults are familiar with some of the more obvious changes in the global workforce, such as (a) the increase in women in the workforce, (b) the increase in the racial and ethnic diversity of the workforce, and (c) the increase in the average age of workers, especially in developed and developing nations. There are, however, other changes occurring in the nature of work itself that are so profound that Jeremy Rifkin (1995) referred to them as "the end of work." Rifkin believed that humans are only just beginning to experience the effects of the technological revolution of work made possible by computers and other information technologies. As the potential of these technologies becomes reality, the global labor force will shrink in both the private market and governmental sectors. Rifkin distinguished between *jobs* and *work*. Fewer and fewer *jobs* will exist, but much *work* will remain. Much of that work will be in the service area, for example, raising and educating children and caring for the sick, the elderly, and the planet. He proposed that compensation for work must be rethought so that all capable persons receive adequate compensation for doing the needed work of the world. Unless that occurs, these changes are so profound that he believed they have the potential to end civilization as we know it. However, Rifkin also believed that these changes have the potential for a fundamental social transformation and a rebirth of the human spirit. How workers are prepared for these changes in the very nature of work will determine the fate of global civilization. Thus, those who prepare the children for this radically different world of work must assist them to both define and redefine the nature of work, as well as the reasons humans work.

In addition to these profound changes in the nature of work, there are changes in the elementary student population. Many of today's children come to school "at risk" owing to a variety of factors. Elementary school teachers and counselors cannot assume that students are ready for career development based solely on chronological age. Career development builds on and is interdependent with normal psychosocial development (Savickas, 1990). That is why traditional career development, which attempts to help children identify and prepare to engage in the types of work to which they are attracted and for which they are suited, often fails. It fails because many children enter school not believing that they *have* a future (a crisis of trust). Or if they believe they have futures, they may not believe they have control of those futures (a crisis of autonomy). Many students are discouraged because they doubt their capabilities to meet the demands of the future (a crisis of competence).

Education for such students lacks purpose. Until they are resolved, these psychosocial crises result in a lack of commitment to the academic and career development tasks appropriate for the elementary years. School counselors, and all adults, do "career" development when they offer programs and services designed to resolve these crises and to prepare students for more directly work-related career development.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

Historically, career has been the underemphasized domain of the three competency areas (personal–social, academic, and career) that are the responsibility of school counselors. Comprehensive career development programs and services at the elementary level are not the norm. School counselors, as well as parents and teachers, often believe that attention to career competencies is more properly provided during adolescence. However, the growing discontent over an underprepared workforce led to the report from the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (1991) and the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994, which emphasized career development for all ages. In the past, elementary schools have been remiss in paying too little systematic attention to the career development of their students. It would be, however, equally remiss to attempt to compensate for past omissions by attempting to provide elementary students career development programs and services traditionally reserved for older students. Appropriate career development for elementary students must accommodate the developmental levels of elementary students.

Developmental career theorists have recognized for almost 50 years that career development is a process, occurring in stages. Donald Super (1990), the preeminent developmental career theorist, defined *career* as the "life course of a person encountering a series of developmental tasks and handling them in such a way as to become the kind of person he or she wants to become" (p. 225). Although Super initially used the term *self-concept* to describe this intersection of the personal and agentic aspects of a person, Herr and Cramer (1996) suggested that the term *self-construct* more appropriately describes the dynamic and ongoing nature of this process of life career development. *Career maturity*, according to Super, is defined as an individual's readiness to cope with the developmental tasks with which he or she is confronted because of biological and social development and because of society's expectations. Super believed that pre-K to 11-year-olds were in a stage at which students move from fantasy notions about jobs to tentative views of themselves as workers. These more realistic views were based increasingly on unique interests and abilities and on the total picture of themselves-in-the-world which they were constructing. In order for elementary students to cope with developmental tasks and to "construct" themselves as the persons they want to be and become, they need two things. They need exposure to and experience with a wide variety of opportunities to learn about the work that is being done in the world. And they need multiple opportunities to learn about themselves—their interests, abilities, and values. As they construct a picture of the world, they construct pictures of themselves in that world. The elementary school counselor can propose this paradigm of *self-construction* as an overarching goal for all of elementary education, not just career development. Then, the counselor can work with school staff, parents, and the community to help students bring their visions to life.

Social learning career theorists focused on the beliefs, attitudes, and skills that children "learn" that affect their career development for ill or for good. Krumboltz

(1979) recognized that children are learning about career all the time. They observe the consequences of certain behaviors to themselves and to valued role models. A young girl overhears "Boys don't like girls who are too smart," and her interest and commitment to challenging school subjects lessens. A young boy hears derogatory remarks about men in traditionally female occupations, and he begins to discount or deny his interest and abilities in those career fields. All students develop generalized beliefs about themselves and the world of work on the basis of their limited observations and experiences. If they limit themselves more on the basis of their beliefs than on reality, they develop what Krumboltz referred to as "troublesome career beliefs." Counselors can work with parents and teachers to provide experiences that permit students to challenge potentially troublesome career beliefs.

Social cognitive career theorists (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994) believed that one's career interests, and hence, career goals are strongly influenced by one's sense of self-efficacy ("Can I do that?"). Interests and goals are also affected by the expectations one has for the outcomes of a given choice ("If I do that, will I like what happens?"). Elementary students need exposure to the realities of the work world, as well as to diverse persons engaged in a wide variety of occupations. Counselors can work with all school staff to make sure that each student has multiple ways to experience success, thus building a realistic sense of self-efficacy with regard to work-related skills. Because students learn about what is possible for them by observing what is possible for persons *like* them, it is vital that their experiences with work involve workers with gender, racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds similar to their own.

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR CAREER COMPETENCE FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

On the basis of changes in the nature of work and selected career theories, several sets of national standards have been developed describing the desired outcomes for career development at the elementary level. In 1989, NOICC published the National Career Development Guidelines. These guidelines list the following career competencies at the elementary level. In the Self-Knowledge domain, students should (a) know the importance of a positive self-concept, (b) have the skills to interact with others, and (c) be aware of the importance of growth and change over the life span. In the Educational and Occupational Exploration domain, students should (a) be aware of the benefits of educational achievement, (b) understand the relationship between work and learning, (c) know the importance of personal responsibility and good work habits, (d) be aware of how work relates to the needs and functions of society, and (e) have the skills to understand and use career information. In the Career Planning domain, students should (a) be aware of the interrelationships of life roles, (b) be familiar with different occupations and changing male–female roles, (c) know the career planning process, and (d) understand how to make decisions.

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act signed into law in 1994 was designed to help all students transition from the school house to the workplace. School-to-work legislation recognized that all students need school-based learning, work-based learning, and opportunities to connect what they are learning in both arenas. Many school-to-work aspects apply to elementary students. All students should have school-based learning opportunities for comprehensive career exploration. Students should be assisted to foster positive attitudes toward work and be helped to make the connection between the learning that occurs in schools and life outside of and after school. All students should receive increasingly intense exposure to the learning opportunities that occur in the world outside the school. For elementary students, this could occur in structured volunteer or service-learning activities rather than in actual employment. A comprehensive articulated program should exist in all schools to help students connect the learning they do in school with their lives outside of school, both currently and in the future. School counselors are in a unique position to coordinate these activities with parents, teachers, and community workers.

The most recent set of career development standards are those published by the ASCA (1997) as part of *The National Standards for School Counseling Programs*. ASCA listed three standards for career development.

> *Standard A*: Students will acquire skills to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self and to make informed decisions. This standard includes career awareness and employment readiness.
>
> *Standard B*: Students will employ strategies to achieve future career goals with success and satisfaction. This standard includes competencies in acquiring career information and identifying career goals.
>
> *Standard C*: Students will understand the relationship between personal qualities, education, training, and the world of work. This includes knowing how to acquire knowledge to achieve career goals and developing skills to achieve those goals. (p. 24)

To become career competent, then, elementary students must become aware of career information and how to find it; must develop a positive attitude toward work and learning; must acquire the personal and work skills of responsibility, dependability, integrity, effort, and cooperative work; must understand the connection between what is learned in school and its application in work, as well as the connection between work and lifestyle; and must understand how personal interests, abilities, values, and personality influence satisfaction and satisfactoriness in work.

SELECTED REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

How do theoretical ideals and national standards for career development for elementary students compare with what is being recommended and what is actually being done with regard to career development in the schools? A selected review of the literature on career development and elementary students revealed three categories of publications. One type reported research on the career development of elementary students. Another type focused on recommendations for ideal career development programs and services. A final type reported the types of programs and services that were actually being provided in elementary schools.

Research on the Career Development of Elementary Students

Research on children's occupational aspirations has a long history. Unfortunately, several studies conducted recently (Gillies, McMahon, & Carroll, 1998; Helwig, 1998; Sellers, Satcher, & Comas, 1999) indicated that students (and boys more than girls) still hold gender-stereotypical career aspirations. There was some evidence, however, that as children's exposure to nonstereotypical occupations increased, this pattern changed, even for nonmajority children (Bobo, Hildreth, & Durodyne, 1998). Young and Friesen (1992) reported that parental influence on the career development of their children continued to be significant.

When 600 elementary students were surveyed about their needs for counseling services, 91% identified career guidance as their greatest need (Dean, 1992). Gillies et al. (1998) reported that career education programs resulted in more student interest in career information, as well as a better understanding of how to use career information resources. Studies done over 20 years ago indicated that both self-concept and career maturity were positively affected by comprehensive programs of career education (Turpin, 1976). More recent studies reported by Isaacson and Brown (1997, p. 264) also indicated that career programming positively affected self-concept, social skills, decision-making skills, and academic achievement (including motivation, attendance, and retention). Students were better able to see the connection between school and work, and parents were more involved in their children's education. Niles and Stamp (1998) reported research indicating that providing comprehensive career programs involved an investment primarily of time by school counselors.

Although these studies indicated that career development would be a wise investment of a school counselor's time, school counselor surveys on the importance of the National Career Development Guidelines indicated that many elementary school counselors attached the least importance to the more directly career-related competencies such as career planning and career information skills (Emmett, Fox, & Perrone, 1998; Freeman, 1994). This result was in contrast to Seligman and Weinstock's (1991, p. 179) extensive study of 10-year-olds, which concluded that "children in this age group have clearly given thought to their futures, have some clear goals and interests, and are not too young to benefit from career education and information."

Recommendations for Elementary Career Development Programs and Services

The rationale for career development programming at the elementary level ranged from the idealistic to the pragmatic. Using Gysbers and Moore's (1981) conceptualization of career as one's self-development over the life span through an integration of the roles, settings, and events of one's life (similar to Super's, 1990, self-concept or self-construct), the development of career competencies throughout the elementary years becomes a part of the proactive, developmental programs of elementary school counseling. Hoffman and McDaniels (1991) viewed elementary guidance programs as life career development programs.

Downing and D'Andrea (1996) pointed out that the educational system in the United States was designed primarily to prepare students for college. Thus, this system has failed to meet the postsecondary needs of 60%–75% of students, resulting in myriad social and behavioral problems in schools. They recommended that American schools look to those European systems in which all learning from the earliest years is clearly connected to life (and work) after school. Hoerner (1994) and Faye and Mooney (1996) recommended individual career planning portfolios as one way to connect school learning to life after school.

Many states have proposed systematic models for career development for K–5 students. Typical of these is the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Model for program development, implementation, and evaluation (Missouri Department of

Education, 1991). The Missouri model for K–5 students listed guidance competencies along with measurable learner outcomes in the three areas recommended by the National Career Development Guidelines (NOICC, 1989): (a) understanding self and others, (b) educational and vocational development, and (c) career planning.

A final type of recommendation pointed out that career development, especially at the elementary level, was more than a "subject area" or a series of activities, no matter how comprehensive and well planned. DuVall (1995) and Faye and Mooney (1996) stressed the *process* nature of career development, and, thus, the need for total integration of career and career competencies with all other learning areas throughout the elementary years.

Reports on Elementary Career Development Programs and Services

Compared with the comprehensive nature of *recommended* career development programs and services, this literature often reported what appeared to be isolated "random acts" of career guidance. Typical of these random acts were one-time career education units (Gillies et al., 1998) or career fairs (Murrow-Taylor, Foltz, Ellis, & Culbertson, 1999). Some authors, however, reported attempts to help students integrate and reflect on these sporadic career events through the long-term use of guidance portfolios (Magnuson, 1997).

THE ROLE OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELOR IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The elementary school counselor has been identified as a natural leader for effective career development programming (Granello & Sears, 1999). The role of leader takes many forms: counselor, coordinator, consultant, and collaborator. The specific duties of the counselor as leader has been expressed by professional organizations and governmental initiatives, such as NOICC, the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994, ASCA, and the National Career Development Association (NCDA).

The role of the school counselor as articulated by NOICC (Ettinger, 1996) requires competency in seven areas: counseling, information, individual and group assessment, management and administration, implementation, consultation, and meeting the needs of specific populations. The school counselor uses a variety of methods to meet the challenge of this role. One vital task of the school counselor is to provide outreach to students so as to alert them to the availability of career development services. Assessment of skills, interests, and achievements is another task that may involve counselors, either directly or indirectly. A traditional activity of the school counselor is to directly provide career information. Indirectly, counselors may provide consultation services to teachers, administrators, and parents. The school counselor must be cognizant of the needs of all students and provide referrals for students with physical or psychological issues that may inhibit career development. Finally, the school counselor provides follow-up by maintaining long-term contact with students (Schwallie-Giddis & Kobylarz, 1993).

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 identified the school counselor as a vital player in the successful transition of students to the world of work (ASCA, 1995). Indeed, "elementary school counselors may describe the work of family or community members or the importance of work" (Granello & Sears, 1999, p. 112) to young students, and thus serve on the front line in providing leadership in career decision making. The school counselor may direct specific activities, such as job-site visits through field trips, job/career fairs, classroom speakers, job-shadowing experiences, and the use of career information delivery systems. The counselor may introduce the use of career portfolios or personalized journals of accomplishments designed to guide students through the career development process and to assist them in making career development decisions. *All* students are included in school-to-work programming. For example, Murrow-Taylor et al. (1999) described a job fair for elementary school students in which speakers represented a diversity in occupations, race, and gender so as to provide role models for all students.

ASCA (1990) specifically emphasized that the role of the elementary school counselor is to *lead* efforts toward fostering career awareness:

> The school counselor, as a career guidance professional, is the person to assume leadership in the implementation of career development outcomes. Furthermore, indirect services to parents, staff, and the greater community, as they relate to the career development outcomes for students, are also the school counselor's responsibility. Indirect services include, but are not limited to, staff development, parent and school board presentations and the establishment of strong supportive linkages with business, industry, and labor. (p. 10)

The elementary school counselor collaborates with teachers to incorporate the development of social skills in the classroom. The counselor can reinforce classroom learning of the rewards of learning to work, developing good work habits, and making sound decisions. The school counselor can use direct and indirect methods to assist students with obtaining competencies associated with positive interactions with others, good self-concept, and effective awareness of personal growth and change (ASCA, 1995).

To effectively carry out this role, the elementary school counselor must make clear to all that career guidance is everyone's responsibility. However, it is the school counselor who assumes the leadership role in accountability and has the authority to develop, coordinate, monitor, and evaluate the total career development program (Holmgren, 1996).

ASCA (1990) endorsed the use of a five-phase approach that recognizes the school counselor as a career guidance professional. In Phase I, the school counselor develops a broad base of understanding between faculty members and the broader community. In Phase II, the school counselor acts with a core committee to develop goals and objectives to which subcommittees add lessons and activities. In Phase III, the school counselor facilitates workshops conducted by core committee members to train all others involved in the delivery of career development programs. In Phase IV, the school counselor coordinates with the core committee to bring Phase III programs to fruition. In Phase V, the school counselor, with the assistance of the core committee, evaluates, revises, updates, and disseminates the program.

To assist the school counselor in fulfilling this role, ASCA has published a handbook, *Vision Into Action: Implementing the National Standards for School Counseling Programs* (Dahir, Sheldon, & Valiga, 1998). This handbook includes step-by-step instructions as well as the necessary forms for assessing programs, creating measurable indicators of success, gathering data, prioritizing student competencies, identifying obstacles and opportunities, evaluating priorities, selecting activities, creating an action plan, establishing benchmarks, evaluating methods, and evaluating the program.

Before children enter schools, their families play a critical role in their career development. The home is where children first become aware of the importance of work and where they form their early perceptions of the connection between education and occupational success. The impact of the family is a concept that should remain salient with the school counselor, and thus the counselor should form partnerships with parents. The school counselor should also serve as a collaborator with teachers in the career development of students. Specific activities for which the school counselor has direct and indirect responsibilities include making the classroom a workplace, teaching and reinforcing productive work habits, helping students understand career applications of subject matter, using community resource persons to emphasize school and work connections, emphasizing career awareness, reducing biases and stereotyping, and fostering career awareness rather than specific occupational choices (NCDA, 1994).

In conclusion, the school counselor in the elementary school can take the lead in promoting a quality 21st-century workforce (Staley & Carey, 1997). Most professional sources describe the role of the school counselor as a counselor, coordinator, and collaborator in this process by providing direct counseling services, advocating for the use of instruction that promotes accepted career development goals, and consulting with teachers regarding strategies that they may implement in the classroom. The school counselor advocates for career development in the educational system, coordinates with school personnel, and evaluates program services.

RESOURCES FOR THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Resources to assist the elementary school counselor in providing effective career development programming exist in a variety of formats. A first stop should be NOICC's Web site, www.noicc.gov. Other essential sites include the School-to-Work Opportunities Act Web site at www.stw.ed.gov, ASCA's Web site at www.schoolcounselor.org, and NCDA's website at www.ncda.org. Finally, NCDA publishes an invaluable source, *The Internet: A Tool for Career Planning* (Harris-Bowlsbey, Dikel, & Sampson, 1998).

One of the most exciting innovations in computerized career information resources is from Bridges Initiatives, Inc. (www.Bridges.com). Career Explorer (CX) is accessible by subscription, via the Internet at http://cx.bridges.com. The site is updated daily with articles that focus on career information, skill development, labor market trends, emerging employment opportunities, and recreational activities. A limited version of CX is available biannually on CD-ROM as an alternative to on-line services. Users of the Internet version will find two ports of entry: professional services and student services. A feature of the professional services avenue is a database of lesson plans that have been suggested by career development experts and contributing educators. Personal attention is available through phone orientation, workshops, and professional conferences. Electronic mail services are also available. The student services avenue contains daily career information news stories. Although not specifically intended for elementary school-age children, students in the upper grades should be able to understand most of the language and will certainly enjoy the interactive nature of the site. A valuable service of CX is the portfolio component. The portfolio provides an electronic means to keep records of accomplishments, experiences, self-evaluation, career research, and education or career plans.

State Sources of Career Resources

Each state has a State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (SOICC) office, which has the duty to disseminate career information for users. An example of a resource available from the North Carolina SOICC (1999) is the *Elementary Career Awareness Guide: A Resource for Elementary School Counselors and Teachers*. The guide contains four sections. The first section references the National Career Development Guidelines competencies. The second section contains activities that can be infused in classrooms. The third section outlines a workshop that can be used with counselor–teacher teams who are interested in developing appropriate classroom activities. The last section is a comprehensive listing of Internet and print sources.

Other states have also developed elementary career development resources. The Oklahoma Department of Vocational and Technical Educational (1994) has produced the *Career Activities Book: K–6*; the Washington State Department of Education (1998) created *Career Development Activities for Every Classroom: K–3 and 4–6*; and the Wisconsin Career Information System created the *Developmental Guidance Classroom Activities, K–3 and 4–6* (Rogala, Lambert, & Verhage, 1991–1992) and *How to . . . Career Development Activities for Every Classroom: K–3 and 4–6* (Jolin & Randolph, 1998). The St. Louis Missouri Public Schools Career Education Office developed many useful sources, including *Me and My Tomorrow: A KG–3 Curriculum Guide for Self and Career Awareness* (Center on Education and Work, 1990), *You Can Be a Star* (Center on Education and Work, 1988), and *Just Me and Busy People: Learning About Personal and Career Awareness* (Center on Education and Work, 1996). Many of the state-developed resources are cross-referenced with state and national career development guidelines.

Traditional Sources Adapted for Elementary Students

A number of sources originally written for users in high school or adults have been modified for use with younger readers. Schwartz and Wolfgang (1996) created the *Children's Occupational Outlook Handbook* (*COOH*). This source introduces students to using occupational information so as to begin career decision-making processes. The *COOH* divides occupations into 12 clusters and contains basic information under such headers as What They Do, Working Conditions, Education and Training, Job Outlook, Average Earnings, Related Jobs, Subjects to Study Now and Later, Getting Ready, Places to Go, and Tell Me More. The *COOH* also contains activities such as Job Outlook and My Career Story.

Barbara Mellor (1997) developed *Activities for the Occupational Outlook Handbook* (*OOH*), which comes in two formats: student workbook and teacher guide. The activities are arranged according to various skill areas related to the *OOH* format. The teacher's guide also provides the facilitator with activity descriptions, objectives, and evaluation. Examples of activities include Word Search and Interview Activity.

The *Student Occupational Outlook Handbook* (*SOOH*; Ferry, 1998) targets students in later elementary grades and middle school grades. The *SOOH* provides more sophisticated information than the *COOH*. It states exact figures and references sources for additional information such as professional organizations. The *Young Person's Occupational Outlook Handbook: Descriptions for American's Top 250 Jobs* (JIST Works, 1996) is written for students in Grades 5–9. This version covers the same jobs as the adult version of the *OOH* but is written in more age-appropriate language.

The *Children's Dictionary of Occupational Titles* (*CDOT*; Hopke & Parramore, 1992) is also available in a CD-ROM version (1996). The *CDOT* helps younger students become aware of the different types of work performed in over 300 occupations. Information provided for each occupation includes pronunciations, job descriptions, and illustrations. The occupations are arranged into 12 career areas: Artistic, Scientific, Nature, Authority, Mechanical, Industrial, Business, Persuasive, Accommodating, Humanitarian, Social–Business, and Physical Performing. Suggested class activities include Radio Talk Show and Job Fair. The CD-ROM version also has narratives performed by elementary students. Counselors using the print version need to be aware that some illustrations picture males and females in gender-stereotypical roles.

Sources for Specific Student Populations

Colorworks: A Rainbow of Jobs (Miller & Keck, 1995) presents occupations to show nontraditional and minority participation. The reproducible activity sheets can be colored using "multicultural crayons." A recommended companion video, *Kidsongs: What I Want to Be* (Rosenstein, 1987), describes different occupations and can be used as an impetus for class discussions on occupational stereotyping.

Dream Catchers (Lindsay, 1993) orients students Grades 4–9 to the "dream catcher legend." The system consists of a student workbook, reproducible activity sheets, and teacher guide. The activities are based on NOICC standards and incorporate three interchangeable parts: Part I, Capture Your Spirit—The Choice Is Yours; Part II, The Stuff Dreams Are Made Of—Discovering Your Skills; and Part III, Make Dreams Come True—Ability, Effort, and Achievement. An example of an activity is Make Your Own Dream Catcher in which students can "weave" their career values into their own dream catcher.

Although not specifically targeting elementary school students, *A Guidebook for Serving Students With Disabilities in Tech Prep* (Gugerty, 1996) is a comprehensive plan for inclusion of special needs students in school-to-work programming. Contributions from a variety of professional educators has resulted in a "best practices" approach for program design, barriers and facilitators identification, strategies and techniques delivery, and program evaluation guidelines.

SOME PROMISING NEW IDEAS IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Some recent nontraditional ideas about career development may be helpful to elementary school counselors. These include (a) the *life career* theory (Miller-Tiedeman, 1999), (b) the *positive uncertainty* decision-making model (Gelatt, 1991), and (c) the holistic approach to career and career development known as *integrative life planning* (Hansen, 1997). Life career theory views a person's whole life as his or her "career." This approach helps school counselors avoid having to choose a single theoretical lens (e.g., matching theory, developmental stage theory, decision-making theory) on which to build career development programs. Rather than offering a single approach to career development and watching "students break themselves against life," Miller-Tiedeman (1999, p. 6) suggested that counselors see each student's life stream as a seamless flow, and this helps them to imagine ways to assist students to go with that flow. This theory helps students accommodate to and shape their lives rather than "breaking themselves" as they try unsuccessfully to fit into a single prescribed model or time table for career decision making. Life career theory is one example of the postmodern approach to career that views career as a narrative construction, that is, a meaning-making activity in which one chooses and plans for the future according to the script that one is developing for his or her own life (Cochrane, 1997).

Most career development programs have been based on a rational, linear approach to decision making. The positive uncertainty model (Gelatt, 1991) complements this rational approach to decision making with a more fluid, intuitive approach. Gelatt proposed that school counselors serve students best when the counselors help them learn to (a) balance achieving goals with discovering new ones, (b) balance using information with using imagination, (c) balance "reality" thinking with "possibility" thinking, and (d) balance responding to change with creating change. It is this ambidextrous paradigm for decision making that Gelatt believed will best equip today's students to deal with the breakpoint changes in today's world.

Hansen's (1997) integrative life planning model described the following shifts in thinking about career: (a) from planning for jobs to planning how to integrate a variety of life roles, including work; (b) from a focus on achievement to a focus on both work and relationships for both men and women; (c) from the expectation and idealization of stability to the expectation and the ability to manage change; and (d) from rational decision making to rational and intuitive decision making that takes one's spirituality into account. From the perspective of integrative life planning, career development is not only about helping students *fit into* the future but also about helping them learn to *create* the future; not only identifying where the jobs of the future are but also identifying the work that needs doing in the world and committing themselves to doing that work. Career development from the integrative life planning perspective does not further fragment children's lives but helps them build both individual and communal wholeness on the personal, local, and global levels.

SUMMARY

The radical changes in the world of work as well as in elementary student populations demand an increased emphasis on career development at the elementary level. But this increased emphasis needs to be more profound than simply delivering to elementary students a diluted version of what schools have often provided the older students in the secondary level. Career development appropriate for both the changing world of work and for the developmental needs of today's elementary students will take a wholistic life career approach. Career development programs will be less discrete and more continuously embedded and integrated into all the curricular and extracurricular elements of the school. The elementary school counselor will be responsible for this deliberate, thoughtful, systematic career development, in large part by serving as consultant and collaborator with parents, teachers, and the whole community, and by coordinating those programs that will develop the career competencies needed by all of today's elementary students.

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Section III

CRISIS/INTERVENTION

Chapter 8

CREATING DEVELOPMENTAL OPPORTUNITY: SYSTEMIC AND PROACTIVE INTERVENTION FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELORS

Patrick Akos

> **"Raising children . . . is about identifying and nurturing their strongest qualities, what they own and are best at, and helping them find their niches in which they can best live out these strengths."**
>
> (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 6).

THE ROLE OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL counselor is as diverse as the schools and children they serve. Some counselors still serve as substitute teachers, hall monitors, and cafeteria aids. Some counselors spend an enormous amount of time outside the school visiting with families and community leaders. Some counselors perform the recommended tasks of individual and group counseling, classroom guidance, consultation, and coordination that are typically described in school counseling textbooks (Baker, 2000; Myrick, 1997). "Even today, school counselors appear to be many things to many people, depending upon the schools in which they are employed and how they usually spend their time" (Myrick, 1997, p. 67).

Each counselor evolves within a school, using her or his own strengths and adapting to each distinct school culture, context, and student need. Meeting student need is also an evolutionary process. Multicultural and postmodern influences have been useful in highlighting the heterogeneity in development among students, who develop at different times, at different rates, and in different ways. Perhaps the common denominator among all elementary school counselors is the numerous roles and tasks each completes to serve large caseloads of children.

Although it is difficult to outline the optimal or typical roles and tasks of the school counselor, several guides exist for practice. Most would agree that the developmental needs of children are the primary focus, and developmental theory serves as the primary guide. Cognitive, emotional, social, physical, moral, and the various other themes of development have been and continue to drive practice. The American School Counselor Association's national standards for school counseling (Campbell & Dahir, 1997) also guide counselor practice. The national standards suggest that academic, career, and personal–social development act as a framework for school counseling programs. These standards are also proposed to ensure service to all students delivered in comprehensive and systemic ways (Campbell & Dahir, 1997).

Recently, several institutions have examined how the role of the school counselor should be transformed to meet the needs of all students in the National Initiative for Transforming School Counseling (The Education Trust, 1999). In the ongoing study, this new vision of school counseling centers on academic development as well as a wider range of helping efforts. The proposed new vision suggests that the school counselor act as a leader, planner, program developer, advocate, broker, and agent of change for all students. Some have called for a redefinition of the school counselor's job to include significant family, community members, and school personnel and end professional isolation (Hobbs & Collison, 1995; Keys & Bemak, 1997). Although the function of the school counselor continues to be debated, how counselors provide help must be changed (Luango, 2000).

Theory, standards, and vision are useful, but creating appropriate helping interventions is still a challenging task. Not only do student development and needs vary, but most research on helping interventions is designed around pathology. Research and treatment manuals are abundant on helping students with uncharacteristic development and pathology. Although school counselors are pushed to focus on the problems experienced by a minority of clients, new standards and visions of school counseling suggest it is more useful to maximize efforts to help all students. The model of prevention is a better theme than pathology, although the targets of prevention are too numerous. To accomplish prevention, counselors must create checklists of negative behaviors to prevent and then design intervention to prevent each type of pathology.

Although a wealth of information is available on how students and children develop, little of the research elaborates how counselor intervention can foster normal or optimal development. Helping students with pathology is essential, but it is not the main function of the elementary school counselor. The school counselor's role is to help students with normal developmental problems at least, and at best, to create and provide developmental opportunity for all students.

Providing developmental opportunity should be the primary intervention for the school counselor. Elementary school counselors can attempt to meet anticipated developmental needs before the needs occur (Baker, 2000). Elementary school counselors especially have the opportunity to facilitate students through the numerous developmental tasks that occur in childhood, laying a foundation for the future. Development is a process of growth and increasing competence (Larson, 2000).

When counselors fail to model intervention after growth and competence, they essentially ignore development as an important part of school counseling. This chapter proposes two useful and promising routes toward creating intervention in the elementary school.

First, because elementary school counselors work with children, the delivery of interventions must be different from typical service to adults. As school counselors promote developmental opportunity, interventions must be made in systemic ways. The responsibility for guidance, growth, and development must be shared among all of the systems in a child's life. A systemic intervention is the first step in being proactive. Second, although the research is not extensive on healthy or optimal development, school counselors must focus interventions toward these ends. Developmental theory and the emerging trends toward positive psychology and resiliency provide promising information for school counselors in providing developmental opportunity. This takes a conceptual shift from focusing on eliminating and reducing pathology to utilizing the strengths to promote optimal functioning (Kazdin, 1994). By focusing intervention on healthy development and competence, elementary school counselors can be proactive in helping all students.

SYSTEMIC INTERVENTION

Although systems theory has been proposed as important to school counselors, interventions by school counselors are still primarily focused on the individual. By focusing on the student alone, school counselors often put more focus on a student already identified as having problems. School counselors have traditionally conceptualized change processes more intrapsychically than systemically (Amatea, 1988). Intrapsychically not only assumes the individual has the problem to be fixed but that this individual has the power and control to fix the problem. Although behavior is not all determined externally, it acts in systems at all times. Therefore, to initiate change in behavior or to provide momentum for developmental tasks, school counselors must intervene systemically.

The school counselor is in an excellent position to influence many aspects of a student's life. School as a major context allows direct access to parents, peers, and often the community. According to Johnston and Gilliand (1987), "The school system is conceptualized as an interactive, organic whole; therefore, changes in one part affect changes in other parts" (p. 111), and the school counselor works within the system as a part of the change process. "This means that in a system there is no single cause–effect relationship that, when discovered, represents the single 'true' or 'real' explanation for a problem behavior" (Molnar, 1986, p. 34). Aponte (1992) explained, "A child with a problem cannot be the sole repository of his problems, nor necessarily should his family. A mental health professional must look at the context of the child with all its ecosystems" (p. 277).

It also means there is not one single path for development. Myrick (1997) defined *development* as the "interaction between what a person is given genetically at birth and the different environments in which the person lives and grows" (p. 28). The school counselor can act as a catalyst for developmental opportunity, creating the impetus for positive growth in the various systems of a child's life.

Perhaps the best theoretical model available for intervention is Henggeler, Schoenwald, Borduin, Rowland, and Cunningham's (1998) multisystemic therapy

(MST), which offers an empirically based and systemic treatment model that focuses on changing the known determinants of antisocial behavior. Keys and Lockhart (1999) suggested that the school counselor should facilitate multisystemic change when faced with student problems. Although an individual may struggle to accomplish developmental tasks, a collection of systems providing the motivation for development may be more powerful (Keys & Lockhart, 1999). Although MST is focused on pathology, it is a useful model for developmental intervention by school counselors. When systems collaborate to promote positive development, the student operates in a context in which goals are clear and predictable.

MST is not a brokerage of services but a direct intervention in all areas of need. It is based on a social ecology model of behavior in which individuals are nested within multiple interconnected systems and behavior is an end-product of the interactions (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Social ecology adds the dimension that these various systems are nested within each other, and these systems affect individuals indirectly as well as directly. For example, a school system will be significantly affected by the amount and type of business and industry located in the community. This interaction between systems creates a different experience for a student. A complete description of MST is available in *Multisystemic Treatment of Antisocial Behavior in Children and Adolescents*, by Henggeler et al. (1998).

An elementary school counselor's intervention for positive development will not be as intensive or focused as MST. For a school counselor, intervention is directed at the developmental needs or tasks of the children instead of one individual. It may be counterintuitive in counseling to put anything ahead of the individual needs of a student. Nevertheless, the ability to promote development for *all* students requires school counselors to create intervention for developmental tasks.

The intervention must be flexible to address multiple determinants of human development and to identify opportunities for development within and between systems. By doing so, the school counselor integrates developmental opportunity in many domains and empowers significant others to promote development. "The way service delivery is set up does not 'define-in' enough of the helpers in effective ways to make a difference for children" (Luango, 2000, p. 311). The promotion of development should become a shared task. In this way, developmental opportunities are present and action oriented, designed for long-term growth, and include weekly (even daily) efforts. They also provide opportunities and resources in the child's natural environment. Addressing the needs of each part of the system increases the opportunities of attaining the long-term goal of healthy childhood development.

To use systemic intervention, the school counselor must assess strengths. Looking at individual, family, peer, school, and community strengths and weaknesses, school counselors can prioritize helping interventions to maximize developmental opportunity. Although these will be distinct for each student and for each school, this type of systemic assessment maximizes counselor efficiency. Starting from strengths, the school counselor then extends to promote interaction and intervention within the other systems. The goal is not to replace or direct other systems, but to work within each system to promote healthy development. At times, intervention may also start by removing obstacles to normal development.

For example, an elementary school counselor may find tremendous participation in community programs. Perhaps within a particular school district, the community parks and recreation program draws a large portion of the community. At the same time, parental involvement in the school is poor. By building on strengths (community programs), the school counselor may look to include school-related programming into these events. Perhaps the community could offer parenting classes that can be collaboratively instructed by the school counselor. Or at the same time, maybe the school counselor could help facilitate some of the community programs to be held at school facilities. Perhaps arts-and-crafts class or beginning golf could be taught at the school, thereby bringing people to the school building. In essence, the school counselor indirectly works to connect the school system with the community. Because of the importance of adult support and participation in the education of students, this connection potentially can help students. Obviously, the connection does not equate to parent involvement in a child's education, but a small systemic change could create ripple effects in the ecology toward this end.

There are unlimited opportunities for school counselors to merge systems within the students' lives to promote development. Part of this role is to move away from expert solutions to a position of generating opportunities in other parts of the system. Creating developmental opportunity is more than intervention as a consultant. Although developmental consultation, such as parenting classes, is an effective systemic helping tool, school counselors should essentially be context managers. As context managers, counselors can build interventions around resources. Also as context managers, counselor intervention efforts are expanded to help a large number of students. Finding the most potent area for developmental opportunity and then expanding the development in multiple systems will help the developmental trend persist.

"The African adage 'It takes a village to raise a child' is an apt description of the resources required to meet children's basic needs for nurturance, guidance, and protection" (Henggeler et al., 1998, p. 209). Systemic intervention provides a useful means of delivery for helping, but the content of the intervention is as important. Most of the systemic interventions in the literature are focused toward pathology and problems within the systems. Elementary school counselors are most helpful when they look proactively to provide developmental opportunities within systems. Part of being proactive requires creating goals of optimal, healthy, or positive development.

PROACTIVE INTERVENTION

A pathology perspective has significant implications on how school counselors intervene to help children. Recognizing the detrimental focus on pathology, preventative thinking has moved toward helping students at risk. Movement in counseling intervention toward at-risk students is an improvement over the pathology model. Instead of looking at specific problems, counselors look to risk factors that could lead to pathology. Although *at-risk* has a variety of meanings in current research, this preventative thinking takes into account developmental paths and contextual influences. Despite the fact that prevention research has shown several human strengths as buffers against mental illness, rarely do school counselors operationalize strengths into intervention for helping students.

The trend toward positive psychology in the American Psychological Association is useful for elementary school counselor intervention. Positive psychology examines subjective well-being, positive individual traits, and positive institutions (Volz, 2000). The movement shifts from healing, disease, and pathology to building positive qualities. The positive psychology movement has begun to operationalize how positive conditions such as wisdom, confidence, and happiness occur (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Although this movement is just beginning, promoting well-being and nurturing strengths are cornerstones to counseling. As this research evolves, so will the scientific intervention efforts of elementary school counselors.

A parallel evolution has been the educational research on resiliency. Instead of looking at pathology and the risks involved in development, this research looks at how students remain resilient in the face of risks. This movement is also ideal for elementary school counselor intervention. Resiliency deals with protective factors, on how students cope to meet challenges and become more capable (Higgins, 1994). Six factors identified by at-risk and resiliency research include prosocial bonding, clear and consistent boundaries, life skills, caring and support, high expectations, and meaningful participation (Milstein & Henry, 2000).

Research on positive psychology and resiliency can be used to create proactive intervention toward developmental tasks and needs for elementary school students. When elementary counselors are faced with overloaded caseloads and with a population that has limited control over daily decisions, intervention for developmental need is the primary proactive helping strategy for these counselors. Rather than therapeutic in nature, these interventions are educational, developmental, intentional, and systemic. Any time students are accomplishing developmental tasks, school counselors are accomplishing much of the "counseling" they are employed to do.

There is generally a lack of direction in defining optimal development. Where disorders are defined thoroughly, well-being and happiness are extremely vague concepts open to attitudinal biases (Rutter, 1995). Therefore, proactive intervention is a descriptive process rather than prescriptive. It also creates a process that must be collaborative. The elementary school counselor must gauge cultural and contextual definitions of healthy development and work within the student ecosystems to promote opportunities toward desired developmental paths. The school counselor also acts as an important source of information and catalyst about the developmental needs of children.

Elementary school counselors already implement a number of proactive interventions. Attempts to increase prosocial bonding, extracurricular activities for students before and after school, developmental activities integrated into the curriculum, and celebrations and rewards for positive behavior all act in proactive ways to foster student development. Following is a case example focused on systemic and proactive intervention for social development in elementary school students.

CASE EXAMPLE: CREATING SYSTEMIC AND PROACTIVE INTERVENTION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Counselor intervention does not come with cookbook-type instructions. As with treatment for pathology, creating developmental opportunity must consider numerous student variables and the ecological context. Distinct from intervention for pathology, intervention to promote development is not as intensive toward the individual. Instead, the intensity of the intervention is focused on the developmental need.

For example, consider the developmental task of social interaction. "Often, the most prevalent and most important developmental process for elementary school students is the movement from an egocentric self to the ability to possess an outward focus on others" (Akos, 2000, p. 215). Although many adults still struggle to master this task, it is when children are in elementary school that they first initiate the shift from egocentrism toward the developmental task of social interaction. Without delineating a comprehensive theoretical background, I present below some considerations for an elementary school counselor when providing systemic and proactive intervention for social development.

School

The most immediate context for counselors is obviously the school. "The school environment provides children and adolescents with a milieu in which they have the opportunity to experience a variety of social roles" (Henggeler et al., 1998, p. 145). Students begin extensive interaction not only with new adults (teachers) for the first time, but also with peers.

This intervention can begin as early as kindergarten, when the transition to school is the first opportunity to make friends. Children observe and begin to interpret emotions within interactions and choose how to respond. It is also the first time that many students attempt to join a peer group. Elementary school counselors can work with teachers and families to provide transitional activities. Teachers often respond positively to assistance in helping with problems and understanding children (Gutkin, 1980). Studies have also shown that consultation can be effective in helping teachers and students in reducing teacher referrals (Ritter, 1978). If consultation is helpful when solving problems, it too should be useful to create developmental opportunity.

In the traditional roles of a school counselor, group counseling and classroom guidance provide opportunity for structured social development. In the early grades, students can learn to recognize and discriminate between emotions. Later, students can build on cognitive development by developing and practicing perspective and role taking. Several resources (Davies, 1999; Feshbach, 1983; Halverson, 1996; Rhoades & McCabe, 1992) provide appropriate topics and activities for empathy and social skill development. Along with classroom guidance and group counseling, elementary school counselors promote this development by coordinating peer mediation and peer counseling or mentoring programs. Although these activities are created with specific goals in mind, they also provide opportunity for social development.

The participation in school clubs and programs provides opportunities to develop cooperative behavior, leadership skills, and friendships (Henggeler et al., 1998). The type of activity or group will depend on the individual, but any opportunity to be involved in prosocial activities in the school provides momentum toward social development. Ideally, the school can provide a springboard for lasting social competence (Henggeler et al., 1998). Whereas the school is the most accessible system for promoting developmental opportunity, the family is perhaps the most influential.

Family

"No matter how dedicated we are about establishing beneficial experiences for children at school, we must never forget that the most significant part of the environment for the child lies outside the school: the child's home and family" (Montgomery, 1999, p. 9). A lack of parent involvement is a major factor for children who are unable to succeed at school (Coleman, 1987). Elementary school counselors must also include the family to encourage social development for the child. Parents vary in the extent to which they create opportunities for their children to have experience with peers, which provide the context for the emergence of social skills (Bukatko & Daehler, 1995).

Part of intervention to assist students with social development is promoting social support among parents and families. Not only can parents tap child-care help and emotional and financial support, but also these same networks provide children with more and diverse opportunities to interact with others. For example, Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) are traditional vehicles for this parental school involvement. What often is lacking in PTA is the opportunity for parents to interact with each other. Networking parents together may provide opportunities for extended family, friends, or neighbors to help bring children together in supervised situations. Although interventions to network parents typically do not fall in the realm of helping children, it again may provide momentum toward more opportunity for children to interact with significant others.

Interventions should empower families to access more supports and at the same time help remove some barriers (Henggeler et al., 1998). Parents can instruct and coach desirable behaviors for social interaction. Elementary school counselors can act to promote social interaction that is most desirable for students. One area in which school counselors may have a more intimate knowledge than parents of student social interactions is with peers.

Peers

"Peer interactions and friendships provide an important context for the development of emotional, social, and cognitive competencies" (Henggeler et al., 1998, p. 125). As early as preschool, the child's concept of friendship is forming, along with skills of cooperation and sharing. Again, the school system interacts with the peer system to create opportunity for social development. The counselor can be more proactive and systemic by providing peer counseling or peer buddy programs (Levi & Zeigler, 1991).

Outside of school, "structured voluntary youth activities provide fertile context for positive development" (Larson, 2000, p. 178). The elementary school counselor can facilitate participation in school and community clubs and sports, service type opportunities, or even spiritual-related activities. Opportunities to practice initiating relationships, collaborating on tasks, and reciprocating interactions begin to build competence in social development. These interactions also begin to form a foundation for communication skills, problem solving, and conflict resolution. Making announcements at school or PTA meetings about upcoming activities (within school and the community) helps facilitate opportunities for development. Often elementary school counselors fail to engage existing community resources to further promote development.

Community

"Schools can better address barriers to learning and teaching and promote positive development when they are an integral and positive part of the community" (Taylor & Adelman, 2000, p. 299). "A school counselor who functions as a school–community liaison can facilitate and coordinate a school's efforts to reach out and engage community expertise" (Keys & Lockhart, 1999, p. 104). Again school, peer, family, and community systems interact to provide developmental opportunity. As with the earlier example, schools can share instruction or share building space in order to promote linkage.

Additionally, summer camps, parks and recreation programs, and cultural/ holiday events provide opportunity for students to work at social development. Another way to promote social development is through service projects. Often in today's multicultural society, students find interaction difficult with people different from themselves. Service projects can be created to work with different age groups (visiting senior citizen homes) or different cultures (participating in multicultural events or projects). The opportunities are endless for encouraging social development in the community.

Individual

Intervention for the individual appears neglected when one considers systemic and proactive intervention for developmental needs. Individual intervention is an important part of the elementary school counselor's job, but it must be balanced with systemic intervention that potentially can reach more students. Individual intervention in this case may be needed to remove impediments to social development. Perhaps a student's low self-concept or signs of depression may hinder social interaction. Referral to outside services or individual counseling with a student may be necessary as a precursor to involvement in the proactive interventions.

The same type of systemic and proactive thinking can be applied for the various needs of elementary school children. The challenge is to make these general helping strategies useful to the students and families in each unique school. The elementary school counselor becomes essential because of a strong knowledge base in child development as well as the ability to work within these systems and with teachers, parents, and community leaders to create opportunity toward a shared vision of optimal development.

LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The time and effort needed for an elementary school counselor to develop and maintain a role in multiple systems seems overwhelming. It does take more time and effort to meet with parents than it does to see a child at school. It is also maybe more comfortable to see a child in the counselor's office than to be involved in the community after school hours. At the same time, systemic intervention for children is more efficient and, as research has suggested, more effective. Again, this does not replace some of the individual helping interventions elementary school counselors use. Instead, proactive and systemic intervention should be a balanced effort that prevents the need for future individual intervention. For example, lunch duty is a common duty that may compete for the school counselor's time. This limitation can be made into strength with systemic and proactive thinking. Perhaps lunch time can be used as an opportunity for fifth-grade students to mentor first or second graders. Although eating lunch together may not equate to quality mentoring, supervised time for peer interaction provides an opportunity for development. The challenge for the school counselor is to create developmental opportunity in each function and in each system of the child's world.

Another consideration is the difficulty of this type of intervention. Working with teachers, parents, and community leaders at times creates resemblance to a "turf war" in which adults battle to decide what is best for children. A guide for the elementary school counselor should not be who provides the opportunities for development, rather how to create the greatest developmental outcomes for students. It is the outcomes of intervention in which helping efforts will be measured.

This type of accountability is important in education. Presently, there is very little empirical evidence supporting school counseling outcomes, and most of the research concerns remediation (Sexton, Whiston, Bleuer, & Walz, 1997). It is a professional responsibility to show how school counselors treat and help students suffering from problems. At the same time, it is as important to show that school counselors are instrumental in promoting development. The difficulty lies in isolating school counselor effects when using systemic and developmental intervention. Not only is longitudinal measurement necessary, but also optimal development is very subjective. The success of preventative (or in this case proactive) programs may have to be shown simply by competence or knowledge (Durlak, 1983). As school counselor research evolves, it will be important to demonstrate the role counselor's play in student competence and development.

SUMMARY

All of the emerging guides for school counselors suggest using systemic and proactive intervention. The national standards for school counseling emphasize providing developmental opportunity for all students. A new vision in the transformation of school counseling recommends that school counselors act as brokers, advocates, and agents of change for all students. Even developmental theory has always emphasized the interaction with environment and the powerful influence of significant others on development. Although theories have suggested these trends, school counselor *intervention* to date has been pathology focused, individualized, and delivered to a limited number of clients.

For children, maturational and developmental changes are driving forces behind interventions. Therefore, the most important question for elementary school counselors is *how* to intervene. Helping children need not be the exclusive act by any one mental health professional or nonprofessional. By recognizing the multiple determinants of development, school counselors' working with the context of the client should produce adaptive characteristics in children. Positive development is often taken for granted because it appears effortless, whereas remedial needs take on a sense of urgency. But it is the positive, normal, and optimal development that is the foundation of counseling. In a recent article on positive development in youth, Larson (2000) stated:

> Imagine, if you will, a field of psychological practitioners whose knowledge, skills, and status are comparable with those of clinical psychologists, who have advanced training in diagnostics, mentoring, and program design, and who draw upon a well-developed body of research to provide guidance and counseling on positive human development. (p. 180)

Although this sense of status may be overrated, school counseling is one of the fields that can help meet this demand. As research evolves on positive human development, elementary school counselors can become leaders and examples in cooperation for the healthy development of children.

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Chapter 9

ENCOURAGEMENT COUNSELING FOR THE DISCOURAGED CHILD

Robert J. McBrien

AFTER EXPERIENCING A FAILURE IN SCHOOL, at home, or playing with peers, discouraged children remain discouraged whereas encouraged children strive to overcome their adversity. Because discouraged children see themselves as inadequate and believe their efforts to gain recognition and approval will yield another failure, they give up. Most adults in their world see these children as sad, pessimistic, or depressed.

Encouragement counseling offers a wholistic solution-focused intervention, with the counselor performing three vital roles: a consultant to parents and teachers, a counselor to the child, and a coordinator of all activities or services used to help the child (Dinkmeyer, Carlson, & Dinkmeyer, 1994). The main goals for counseling include guiding the child to develop an optimistic outlook on life and to know and develop personal strengths. It is the counselor's aim to help the child find recognition and approval from family and school through positive contributions and successes and to have a positive sense of self. The theory behind all strategies used come from Adlerian, cognitive, and behavioral teachings. In encouragement counseling, the focus is on identifying the child's strengths and helping parents and teachers learn and practice the encouragement process. With an emphasis on mutual respect and cooperation, encouragement counseling more than qualifies as an effective method for the multicultural settings most school present.

I begin this chapter with a profile of a discouraged second grader, a composite of several children I have counseled. This client profile introduces the key components to guiding a discouraged child. Next I introduce the psychology of discouragement and offer the basics for understanding the process of discouragement. I follow this with a discussion of the psychology of encouragement by presenting the operational definition of encouragement and describing the use of specific communication skills as a key to redirecting a discouraged child.

In the section on the process of encouragement counseling, I describe the three key roles played by the counselor (Dinkmeyer et al., 1994). The first role, as a consultant to parents and teachers, requires a collaborative effort by all. The key to the effectiveness of the home and school intervention is the elimination of adult–child interactions that promote discouragement. The second role, as the counselor, involves four stages: (a) establishing rapport, (b) making the assessment (including the identification of the child's strengths), (c) explaining the results of the assessment to parents, teachers, and the child and motivating all parties to strive to practice new skills as they work on the fourth stage, which is (d) making the changes agreed to at the conclusion of the third stage. Counselors can include a follow-up in the fourth stage. The third role, as a coordinator, includes scheduling conferences, keeping all parties informed, and keeping the lines of communication open among all parties.

I end the chapter with a review of the encouragement counseling model and a challenge to elementary school counselors to identify discouraged children in their school. Applying this optimistic approach to their work with elementary children can give counselors a sense of satisfaction and success. Knowing that a child they counseled has developed a positive outlook on life that makes a lasting difference will not only give counselors personal and professional satisfaction but also promote optimism for their work and may prevent professional burnout.

A PROFILE OF A DISCOURAGED CHILD

Billy is a 7-year-old second grader. His referral for counseling was the consensus of parents and teachers after a conference called by his concerned teachers. Following are descriptions of the concerns of teachers and parents.

Both the lead teacher and assistant described noticeable changes in Billy's mood, activity level, and academic performance. As the lead teacher noted, "His light is growing dimmer." Specific concerns listed by teachers were carelessly written work and a tendency to rush through an assignment (apparently to be the first to finish). The result was that Billy often had to do the work over. They noted he was straggling behind whenever the class moved to other activities (they described his behavior as last in line, dragging himself along, head down, sad face).

Other concerns involved social interactions. Billy frequently complained to his parents that the other children were teasing him on the playground. Not very athletic, he was teased for his poor skills, and the children did not include him in their pickup games. Billy took this teasing very hard.

Other teachers who know Billy, those from earlier grades, and the specialists (music, art, and physical education) noticed these changes as well. They also expressed concern that a once cheerful, active, and popular boy was on his way to becoming a sad and lonely underachiever.

The interview with Billy's parents presented similar concerns. Billy's mother was concerned that her son was depressed. It seems that a history of bipolar illness exists in her family. She also wondered if Billy has a learning disability. If teachers were reporting substandard written work and suggesting underachievement, his mother wondered if he needs to be tested for a learning disability.

Billy's father was concerned that his son is getting lazy. He reported that Billy completes homework in a hurry so he could watch television. There is increasing tension between father and son regarding the father checking Billy's homework. Both parents expressed concern that Billy is becoming sedentary.

Regarding sleep and appetite, both parents were concerned that their son is becoming an overeater. Again, the parents expressed concern about the teasing by peers. Apparently, the other children are targeting their taunts on Billy's weight and lack of agility. The mother reported that Billy will often wake up in the night or occasionally report bad dreams.

When asked about friends, Billy's mother told us that his best friend has changed allegiances and the relationship is warm at best. Billy's sister, 3 years older, has begun to tease and criticize him, especially when she is with her friends. The father described his son as an "injustice collector"—he takes any teasing or slight very hard. It seems that whenever the parents tell him "no," Billy complains that no one likes him. He often recites a litany of wrongdoings others have delivered to him during the day.

A key source of information comes from answers to the question, "How is his sister most different from Billy?" The parents responded with descriptions of the sister's success in classes, being popular with a circle of friends, and having a more positive outlook on life.

When asked what the parents have been doing to remedy the situation with Billy, their response revealed that there is a difference in parenting styles. The mother works for understanding and to "make her son happy," whereas the father gives pep talks or lectures on getting focused and doing better. On further inquiry, it appears that both parents believe that their son can do better in school. However, their efforts to persuade him to buckle down appear to create more tension than resolve the problem. For example, they remind him to not rush through a home assignment, they check his work, and they set limits to television watching. Also, they have begun to persuade him to go outside rather than watch television.

In summary, Billy's teachers and parents noticed changes in him that raised concerns and prompted their request for counseling. A formerly cheerful, sociable, and motivated boy has become a sad, isolated, unmotivated second grader.

The first interview was to accomplish three goals. Goal 1 is to establish rapport. Goal 2 is to gather information from Billy related to the concerns expressed by his parents and teachers. Goal 3 is to plan the treatment strategies to remedy the situation (see Dinkmeyer et al., 1994, for a model of the first interview). Billy came into the office willingly, made good eye contact, and was cooperative during the interview. When asked why he was having this appointment, Billy did not offer a clear reason. The counselor's explanation that parents and teachers were concerned about what was happening this year in school seemed acceptable to Billy. Interview questions focused on school (favorite and least favorite classes) and friends (a best friend, sleepovers, and shared activities). Questions also addressed home (parents, sibling, and the routine) and favorite things (foods, activities, and television programs). The classic "If I could give you three wishes" question identified more fun and less work themes. In brief, Billy's discouragement centered on his perception that he had few close friends and school was not much fun. The bright spots in the week were his time with his dad, watching television, and Saturday activities with the family. On the "How was your day?" rating scale (see Appendix A), Billy showed that he was generally sad and unhappy about the events of the day.

Encouragement counseling was the treatment of choice for Billy. This comprehensive program of interventions is based on the work of Adler (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1965), Dreikurs (1953), Dinkmeyer (Dinkmeyer et al., 1994), Evans (1991), and Seligman (1995).

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF DISCOURAGEMENT

Alfred Adler and his followers described the individual as a social person with an innate need for belonging (Adler, 1927/1998; Albert, 1996). From infancy on, energized by this primary motive (to belong), each person strives for recognition, approval, and a place in the group. When this basic need is met, the child grows to become successful in the five major aspects of life: self-worth, relationships, work, contributions to society, and a sense of purpose or mission.

If children are not successful in finding a place through positive actions, they sometimes discover that they can gain recognition through misbehavior. Our definition of misbehavior goes beyond disruptive or obnoxious acts. The broad spectrum of misbehavior (or discouraged behavior) includes underachievement, school failure, social withdrawal, and antisocial acts. Patterns of misbehavior ranging from distracting attention getting and power seeking to vengeful acts and displays of inadequacy (Dinkmeyer, McKay, & Dinkmeyer, 1997, p. 42) are signs of discouragement. Discouragement can be defined as a pervasive feeling paired with a pessimistic belief that attempts to improve the present situation are futile (Dinkmeyer & Dreikurs, 1963, p. 35). This pervasive feeling of discouragement overcomes the natural tendency to seek a fulfilling life (Dreikurs, Grunwald, & Pepper, 1982, p. 6). Dinkmeyer and Dreikurs (1963) stated,

> The process of discouragement and encouragement influences the person's concept and expectations of him. If he is induced to expect more and better deeds from himself, then he is encouraged. Conversely, if his doubt in his abilities is increased, he becomes discouraged. (p. 37)

Dinkmeyer and Dreikurs (1963, p. 38), Dreikurs et al. (1982, p. 52), and Albert (1996, p. 90) listed several dynamics that contribute to the child developing a discouraged attitude toward life's challenges. The factors include adults in the child's life (a) setting high and unrealistic expectations or, in other cases, negative expectations for success; (b) using massive doses of negative criticism; (c) emphasizing competition or being the best; and (d) using rewards and presents to motivate the child's performance.

In summary, in the social dynamics of family and classroom and peer groups, each child strives to find a place that meets the basic need for recognition and approval. Discouraged children are motivated to remain discouraged because they believe they cannot have positive (and adult-pleasing) outcomes for their efforts. Encouragement counseling aims to reverse the process of discouragement. The theoretical bases for the strategies used by encouragement counseling are rooted in Adlerian, behavioral, and cognitive counseling theories (Thompson & Rudolph, 1983). A clear understanding of the psychology of discouragement guides the counselor in the selection of strategies to be used to encourage the child. The goal for encouragement counseling is to create movement away from discouragement and toward encouragement when confronting the challenges of school and peers, developing positive relationships, and developing feelings of self-worth. The ultimate goal is the child has a more optimistic outlook on life.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Just as a plant requires nurturing soil, sunshine, and water, children require encouragement. Encouragement counseling theory teaches that to be encouraged means to have an optimistic attitude toward the challenges of life. The basic life challenges for children are focused on self-identity, relationships, and school and achievement issues. In this chapter, the psychology of encouragement is defined as the process of guiding the child to develop attitudes and learn skills for facing life's challenges, especially adversities, with an expectation that a positive outcome is possible. Based on the work of Dreikurs (Dinkmeyer & Dreikurs, 1963), Dinkmeyer (Dinkmeyer & Eckstein, 1993), Eckstein (1995), and Evans (1991), this process involves one person (the counselor, teacher, or parent) sending messages at all levels (cognitive, behavioral, and emotional) to another (the child) that communicate acceptance, trust, respect, and belief in the child's abilities.

How is encouragement conveyed? In general, adults can encourage the child with language. Encouraging communications, including tone of voice and choice of words, send continual messages to the child that the child:

1. Is cherished and appreciated for being in the adult's life (and not for achievements).
2. Has ability, is capable, and is making a contribution.
3. Deserves recognition for a job well done (i.e., doing one's best).
4. Is appreciated for making the effort to accomplish a task or assignment.
5. Is improving in an area in which there is a challenge (including temporary failures).
6. Has strengths and assets.

Encouragement is a necessary alternative to the typical praise-and-criticize method that is observed in homes and schools today (Dreikurs et al., 1982, pp. 108–112, Ferguson, 2000, pp. 201–202). According to Ferguson (2000), praise is a form of extrinsic motivation, whereas encouragement serves to increase the person's intrinsic motivation. Adlerians preferred encouragement because it promotes the optimistic outlook needed to meet life challenges, especially setbacks and adversity. Azoulay (1999) compared Adlerian psychology with traditional behavior management methods and found major advantages in the use of encouragement and logical consequences. Azoulay (1999) concluded,

> Encouragement and consequences are designed with the child's cognitive schema in mind so that training methods will meet a minimum of resistance, help children develop a belief system that values mutual respect and social cooperation, and increase the child's self-esteem at the same time. (p. 98)

A major task in encouragement counseling is to teach parents and teachers to recognize the differences between praise and encouragement. To be earned, praise requires that standards be met. Who sets the standards? Requiring the child to meet standards set by adults is the chief clue to the external aspect of praise. Praise is conditional. When used as the major method for motivating children, praise can be a source of discouragement. Encouragement is unconditional, recognizes effort, and celebrates improvement.

McKay (1992, pp. 11–12) offered the following six criteria for encouraging the child. The adults' comments will encourage when they:

1. Show acceptance: "I can see that you are pleased with your science project."
2. Guide the child to self-evaluate: "How do you think you did on your math test?"
3. Promote confidence and show that you have faith in the child: "Knowing you, I feel sure that you can handle the situation."
4. Appreciate contributions and cooperation: "Thanks for your help, you saved me much time."
5. Recognize effort and improvement: "You practiced every day and I can see lots of improvement."
6. Focus on strengths and assets: " I need your help programming the VCR, you are good with electronics."

Ferguson (2000) summarized research by Ginsberg and Bronstein (1993, cited in Ferguson, 2000) that supports Adlerian theory on reducing praise and maximizing encouragement. Ginsberg and Bronstein's study assessed family patterns and style of parenting of fifth graders. They reported that children from families with overcontrolling or undercontrolling styles had an extrinsic motivation orientation in school and had lower academic performance than children from families who encouraged and supported autonomy. This group had an intrinsic motivation orientation and higher academic performance (Ginsberg & Bronstein, 1993, cited in Ferguson, 2000, p. 202). Ginsberg and Bronstein's research provides clues to the case of Billy. Both parents tended to overcontrol, especially regarding work and leisure activities.

THE PROCESS OF ENCOURAGEMENT COUNSELING

The process of encouragement counseling involves the school counselor performing three roles: consulting with parents and teachers, counseling the child, and coordinating the specific strategies selected for the home, the classroom, and the counselor's office. With encouragement counseling, a more comprehensive program of change strategies is present. This system is an improvement over the approach of referring the child to the counselor's office to be "fixed" with little or no parent–teacher involvement. Encouragement counseling applies the rule: To change the child's approach to a challenging situation, counselors will ask the adults to change first (Dinkmeyer et al., 1994).

The Consultant Role

Consulting with parents and teachers is a collaborative effort (Dinkmeyer et al., 1994, pp. 15–18) with the following characteristics:

1. The goal is to change the adult–child relationship.
2. There is an exchange of information, including observations and concerns.
3. A solutions-focused approach to identifying change strategies is used.
4. All recommendations respect the dignity and worth of the child and the adult and consider the setting when planning the corrective approach.

When the encouraging counselor is acting as consultant and shares information with the parent or teacher, Dinkmeyer et al. (1994) advised:

> The primary characteristic of the consultant's information is that it is consistent with a theory of human behavior that the consultant thinks will help the consultee. We can summarize our approach by stating that the behavior, even misbehavior, has a purpose that can be understood (Dreikurs, 1950). Farther, the most effective techniques for change require the consultee, the person most interested in change, to initiate new behaviors (i.e., show how the teacher needs to change first). (p.17)

The first consultation serves to explain the general goals for consultation, including the sharing of information and concerns. This meeting may involve all parties concerned: teachers, parents, and counselor. Key tasks for the school counselor during the first consultation are to introduce the concerned adults to the psychology of discouragement and encouragement. Next, the counselor assesses present levels of adult–child interaction. At the end of the intervention, a follow-up assessment measures improvement (see Appendix B). One task for the consultant is to identify the adult's belief system regarding motivating children and why children misbehave. Perhaps the most important task is the assessment of adult attitudes and behaviors associated with motivating the discouraged child to succeed. The counselor-as-consultant is especially listening for the "shoulds" (McKay, 1992, p. 5). The success of home and classroom interventions will depend on the elimination of the six categories of discouragement identified by Carlson and Thorpe (1984, pp. 27–29): (a) negative expectations, (b) perfectionistic or unrealistic standards, (c) an emphasis on competition, (d) overambition, (e) double standards, and (f) criticism.

The message parents and teachers need to hear is that if they want to encourage positive changes in the child, they must first eliminate any beliefs and behaviors that discourage. After presenting general goals for helping the child, the counselor-as-consultant will schedule separate meetings with teachers and parents to develop specific strategies for the classroom and home.

I begin with specific teacher behaviors that encourage children. Successful strategies that teachers can use to promote feelings of competence include giving choices as often as possible, giving a responsibility, and holding children accountable for their actions. Additional methods are recognizing the child's strengths, setting realistic standards, knowing the value of setting limits, and, when a child tests them, knowing how to say no. Strategies that build esteem are recognizing contributions, treating children with respect, and promoting mutual respect.

Specific parenting behaviors that encourage children are similar to those for teachers. Encouraging parenting behaviors include developing an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation. Helping children feel powerful by giving choices, assigning chores that contribute to the management of the home, and holding the child accountable for completing chores promote feelings of competency. Other parenting behaviors include setting realistic expectations, recognizing effort and improvements, and acknowledging the child's strengths.

Rather than tell parents and teachers what changes to make or actions to take, the counselor often has to take time to teach the concerned adults encouragement skills. Two sources that are useful for this training task are Albert's (1996) *Cooperative Discipline* and Dinkemeyer et al.'s (1997) *The Parent's Handbook: Systematic Training for Effective Parenting*. These texts offer information on the importance of encouragement and give instruction in basic encouragement skills. One approach to this training task is to create a study group for the adults concerned about discouraged children. This can take place during the day as a part of the counselor's workload or during after-school periods as a flextime activity.

To summarize the consultant role, the main task is to negotiate a collaborative effort with the adults who are concerned about the discouraged child. This team approach operates from an understanding of how children become discouraged and how they maintain discouragement (it serves some purpose that fits the child's private logic). The counselor emphasizes the importance of using encouragement strategies to redirect the child to gain recognition and status in positive ways.

The Counseling Role

As a solutions-focused system, encouragement counseling directs its energy to the present and the future. To visualize encouragement counseling, think of a vertical dimension (everything that happens today in this counseling session) and a horizontal dimension (all that takes place during the course of counseling, say, between 4 and 12 sessions). The vertical dimension involves four stages: winning the child over (Dreikurs et al., 1982), investigating the child's experiences with discouraging events, preparing the child to learn skills that promote the achievement of goals set with the counselor, and encouraging the child to apply these new skills at home and in school (Dinkmeyer et al., 1994, pp. 158–162).

To win the child over means establishing a trusting relationship, building hope, and challenging the child to learn new ways of coping with adversity. Dreikurs et al. (1982) described the types of relationship that permit the counselor to influence changes by a discouraged child: "these qualities require a proper relationship based on mutual respect, on a sense of equality, despite all individual differences of knowledge, power and position" (p. 93). In other words, the encouraging counselor uses every skill learned in counselor training for establishing rapport (i.e., open-ended questions and reflective listening skills) and more. To win over the child involves creating a collaborative atmosphere, treating the child with respect (as demonstrated by tone of voice, body language, and an attitude that conveys, "We will work on these challenges together, and I believe that we will have success"). The counselor's words and actions consistently are respectful and display belief in the child's ability to solve present challenges and move onto more satisfying times. The attitudes of respect, trust, and belief in the child's potential paired with the collaborative efforts to resolve present challenges send encouraging signals throughout the counseling process.

By this time, a database is in place of the child's strengths and weakness as viewed by parents and teachers blended with the child's view. This database provides a more complete picture of personal assets and abilities. Along with the subjective information gained from the child, parents, and teachers, using information and assessments based on *multiple intelligence theory* adds objectivity to the search for the child's strengths (Armstrong, 1993).

By identifying and coaching the child to use her or his strongest intelligence, the adult encourages the child to develop unrealized potentials, have success, and gain recognition along the way. The eight intelligences or ways of being smart (Armstrong, 1993; Wilson, 1998) are as follows:

1. Verbal/Linguistic (*Word Smart*)
2. Logical/Mathematical (*Logic Smart*)
3. Visual/Spatial (*Picture Smart*)
4. Body/Kinesthetic (*Body Smart*)
5. Musical/Rhythmic (*Music Smart*)
6. Interpersonal (*People Smart*)
7. Intrapersonal (*Self Smart*)
8. Naturalistic (*Nature Smart*)

Counselors may find many World Wide Web resources on multiple intelligence theory and applications, including multiple intelligence inventories (I found a multiple intelligence survey by McKenzie, 2000, at http://www.surfaquarium.com/im.htm). For the present example, Billy's strongest intelligence was Interpersonal.

The investigation of the child's discouragement is focused on events leading to discouragement. The inquiry includes people, places, and a triggering event. Next, the investigation queries the child's reaction to the triggering event. Answering the question, "What is the use?" (sometimes called "secondary gain") of the discouraged mood (i.e., to gain attention or to evade a responsibility) uncovers the payoff for maintaining the mood. Counseling involves encouraging the child to move beyond discouragement.

A program of cognitive and social problem solving skills that teaches children to cope successfully with adversity is effective with school children (Gillham, Reivich, Jaycox, & Seligman, 1995; Jaycox, Reivich, Gillham, & Seligman, 1994). These researchers reported that the skills taught to overcome pessimism served as a prevention for depression. The cognitive therapy and social skills were taught to fifth and sixth graders in these studies and are explained with useful examples in Seligman (1995). Another resource for teaching coping with adversity skills is found in Shapiro's (1997, pp. 135–167) work on emotional intelligence.

Stress coping skills are of concern in encouragement counseling. Stress management is becoming a 21st-century survival skill. A basic tool for young children that may be a life-long skill is using a relaxation technique. Teaching relaxation skills to children is not new (McBrien, 1978). The training method I recommend is teaching a brief relaxation method such as slow diaphragm breathing while making an audio tape of the procedure. The child takes the tape home to be used for daily practice. Invite the child to teach the skill to the rest of the family as a contribution to their well-being.

Encouraging the child to use new skills at home and in school represents the final stage of counseling. In this stage, the counselor challenges the child to practice new skills. These homework assignments continue throughout the counseling period. One home task to assign at the close of the first session is to have the child note on an index card (provided by the counselor) the number of times something pleasant happens during the day. The goal for this task is to shift a pessimistic mind-set to a more optimistic mind-set. Although written tasks may be useful for the work of counseling, the child may find them distasteful or difficult; thus, counselors should try to present the task as a choice rather than a chore. Follow-up of home assignments is important. Early in the session, the child is asked about previously assigned home assignments. As the child describes the experience, the counselor uses the same encouragement skills that are expected of parents and teachers (i.e., recognizing effort and noticing improvement). Not doing the assignment does not equal resistance. Rather, it suggests a need to take smaller steps, have more rehearsals, or spend more time investigating the child's experiences with the challenging situation.

With the horizontal dimension, counseling focuses on three areas: building on strengths, increasing self-esteem, and coaching the child in new skills, especially effective ways to overcome adversity (Seligman, 1995). Recognizing and building strengths is a key to redirecting the child away from the pessimism associated with discouragement. For example, the child who is high in interpersonal intelligence (People Smart) can build this strength when allowed to go to a lower grade to tutor a younger child. This "home assignment" is possible because of the consulting relationship the counselor has with the child's teacher. Furthermore, this activity results in the child growing in social interest, which is a quality associated with positive self-esteem (see Brigman & Molina, 1999).

All skills, assertiveness, relaxation to reduce stress, or study skills are taught in a climate that allows the child to build hope. Skill coaching involves direct instruction in those skills targeted to help the child reach the goal of being more positive. The goal is to have the child feel hopeful about himself or herself having success now, and in the future. Encouragement counselors will find an effective cognitive therapy strategy for teaching the child to overcome adversity in Seligman (1995). The main task is to encourage the child to continue making an effort and learn more effective goal-setting and problem-solving skills to overcome a failure (Seligman, 1995).

The Coordinator Role

The task of coordinating all efforts for the child includes scheduling conferences with all adults concerned, reporting on progress, being on-call to all concerned, and working to maintain open lines of communication with all parties. This team approach gains a higher level of cooperation than when home and classroom are on separate lines of communication. A key task of the counselor-as-coordinator is teaching the adults skills. This role gives the counselor opportunities to model the encouragement skills parents and teachers are expected to use with the child. Special care is needed when coaching the adults to effectively promote the child's self-esteem. The goal is to teach the child a wholistic view of self-esteem, for the child to develop the attitude and believe, "I am cherished, I am capable, and I make a contribution." I refer to this as the "three Cs of self-esteem." To maintain this belief despite a failure or disappointment requires encouragement from significant adults, success experiences in as many of the eight intelligences listed above as possible, and opportunities to help or make a contribution. It is critical that the pitfalls of trying to give children high self-esteem are avoided. Seligman (1995) stated,

> America has seen thirty years of a concerted effort to bolster the self-esteem of kids. . . . But something striking has happened to the self-esteem of American children during the era of raising our children to feel good. They have never been more depressed. (p. 36)

Enlisting the "encouragement team" to take steps to help the child experience the three Cs of self-esteem can be achieved with a counselor-led seminar. (My materials for both my Encouragement and Three Cs of Self-Esteem seminars are available to the reader. Contact rjmcbrien@juno.com.)

SUMMARY

Encouragement counseling is a solutions-focused system grounded in Adlerian psychology. Adlerians understand that discouragement serves some purpose for the child. The discouraged child may be gaining attention or service, could be evading responsibility, or may be signaling that he or she is experiencing depression. Using information gathered from teachers, parents, and the child, the school counselor applying encouragement counseling creates a program of strategies that will guide the child away from discouragement to an optimistic outlook on life. The counselor performs three vital roles: consultant, counselor, and coordinator of services to the discouraged child. The counselor who uses encouragement counseling coaches teachers to be encouragers, serves as a parent educator, and teaches skills that are effective in encouraging children. Parents and teachers are taught to create environments in which all are treated with respect and invited to cooperate, and this minimizes discouragement in the child. This collaborative effort applies encouragement "tools," such as expressing respect, giving choices, and challenging the child to make another effort after a failing attempt. The adults in the child's world create conditions that allow the child to succeed by using her or his strengths while making a contribution. With the emphases on both self-esteem and "other" esteem, encouragement counseling can be an effective approach in a multicultural setting.

Hanna, Bemak, and Chung (1999) developed a new paradigm for counseling that challenges counselors to use wisdom, not just intelligence. The Adlerian principles described in this chapter have been effectively used for more than 75 years and, when paired with recent developments in cognitive and behavioral therapies, more than meet the wisdom challenge. The challenge for 21st-century elementary school counselors is to learn and use effective methods in their work with children. My challenge to the reader is to set a goal that the school you serve is recognized as an encouraging place for all. Encouragement counseling has the potential for meeting that challenge.

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Appendix A

ENCOURAGING COUNSELING TOOL KIT

HOW WAS YOUR DAY? Rating Scale

How was your day?				
Name Billy				**Date** 4/04/00
☹ ☹ ☹	[✓ ☹ ☹]	😐	☺☺	☺ ☺ ☺

How was your day?				
Name			**Date**	
☹ ☹ ☹	☹ ☹	😐	☺☺	☺ ☺ ☺

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Appendix B

ENCOURAGING COUNSELING TOOL KIT

MY PLAN FOR POSITIVE CHANGES (PARENTS)

The following misbehaviors by _______________ are challenging me.

	Meals/eating		Chores/duties		Lying
	Bedtime/wake up		Anger/temper		Stealing
	Arguments/fights		Dawdling		(other)
	Clutter/messy		Back talk		(other)
	School work/grades		Lack of respect		(other)
Check the challenges that apply. Circle your no. 1 concern					

My usual response to misbehavior is (check all that apply).

	Telling/lecturing		Hard looks/glaring		Name calling
	Disappointment		Criticizing		Embarrassing
	Loss of privilege		Threats		(other)
	Getting angry		Complaining		(other)
	Yelling/shouting		Sarcasm		(other)

The misbehavior to work on first is ____________.

The plan I have for remedying the situation involves changes in me.

(List 3 Encouragement techniques you will be using)

I will reevaluate my plan in ________ days and list improvements below.

Appendix B (continued)

ENCOURAGING COUNSELING TOOL KIT

MY PLAN FOR POSITIVE CHANGES (TEACHERS)

The following misbehaviors by _______________ are challenging me.

	Lunch time/eating		Chores/duties		Lying
	Transitions		Anger/temper		Stealing
	Arguments/fights		Dawdling		(other)
	Messy desk		Back talk		(other)
	School work/grades		Lack of respect		(other)
Check the challenges that apply. Circle your no. 1 concern					

My usual response to misbehavior is (check all that apply).

	Telling/lecturing		Hard looks/glaring		Name calling
	Disappointment		Criticizing		Embarrassing
	Loss of privilege		Threats		(other)
	Getting angry		Complaining		(other)
	Yelling/shouting		Sarcasm		(other)

The misbehavior to work on first is _______________.

The plan I have for remedying the situation involves changes in me.

(List 3 Encouragement techniques you will be using)

I will reevaluate my plan in _______________ days and list improvement below.

Appendix B (continued)

ENCOURAGING COUNSELING TOOL KIT

POSITIVE CHANGE PLAN FOLLOW-UP

In **one** week and **four** weeks rate the results on the following scale
Follow-up ratings for Week No. __________

The situation is:	The same	Improved	Very Improved
	The same	Improved	Very Improved

How has the climate changed? (Check all that apply)

	less	same	more		less	same	more
Respect				Tension			
Caring				Contributing			
Talking				Self-control			
Cooperation				Laughter			
Friendly				(Other)			

What did you do that worked?

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Chapter 10

USING THE 4C'S TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SETTINGS

John F. Arman, Emily Phillips, and Robert McNair

MILLIONS OF CHILDREN ARE NEGATIVELY INFLUENCED by alcoholism every day of their lives (Crespi & Sabatelli, 1997). In 1990, it was estimated that there were 28 million children of alcoholics (COAs) in the United States (Hawthorne, 1990). Currently, researchers estimate the number of children in the United States with at least one alcoholic parent is anywhere between 7 and 35 million (Post & Robinson, 1998). Crespi and Sabatelli (1997) estimated that one in six families is affected by alcoholism. It is unknown exactly how many COAs exist in the year 2000, although it is safe to assume the number is greater than these staggering statistics indicate. Unfortunately, most children within these alcoholic families do not belong to any support group because of the denial and secrecy associated with alcoholism, nor are they regularly included in parental treatment (Robinson & Rhoden, 1998).

COAs suffer from myriad behavioral and psychological ailments, including excessive school absenteeism, compulsive behaviors, low self-esteem, and emotional withdrawal (Robinson & Rhoden, 1998). Children who live with alcoholic parents have a higher rate of suspension from school, a higher rate of using alcohol themselves, lower grades, and a higher rate of being retained a grade. They may display anxiety, attention problems, attachment problems, social isolation, conflict avoidance, and physical symptomatology (Price & Emshoff, 1997).

Price and Emshoff (1997) reported that COAs are at an increased risk for both behavioral and emotional problems, including school failure, delinquency, depression, and anxiety. COAs also have greater difficulty in forming attachments, building relationships, developing problem-solving strategies, and expressing emotions (Crespi & Sabatelli, 1997). Because children tend to imitate the models they are shown, living with an alcoholic parent can teach them dysfunctional coping styles. Specifically, alcoholic parents model negative coping methods for their children, such as denial, wishful thinking, and avoidance behaviors. Although these behaviors relieve some of the stress, they can also become self-defeating and make it difficult for the youths to seek help or to even acknowledge that help is needed. The various roles children play in alcoholic family systems (Black, 1981) make it difficult to clearly identify them and to link their behavior and temperament to the problem of alcoholism. This issue is even further complicated by the fact that elementary school-age children, by their very nature, may find it difficult to identify and articulate the sources of their stress.

Depending on which author one reads, the labels may vary but the core roles that children play in alcoholic family systems remain the same: the acting-out child (often disruptive), the hero (often overachieving), the clown (covering up feelings of hurt with laughter), and the invisible child (attempting to keep a low profile; Black, 1981). The acting-out child or the clown may come to the attention of school officials for disciplinary action but may not be referred for counseling. For example, Phillips, one of the authors of this chapter and previously a school counselor, was in a middle school office one day when a young man whom the school had identified as a "troublemaker" was being disciplined by the principal. Amidst a great deal of yelling, Phillips was able to discern that the student had been brought to the office for breaking open lockers and destroying other children's belongings. Although several teachers were yelling at him to stop, he did not stop until he punched a seventh grader in the face as he neared the end of the lockers. She overheard this young man yelling, "What do I have to do to get you to listen to me? How bad do I have to be?" This young man and his behavior are prime examples of the acting-out child as he externalized his cry for help. Over the previous 4 years, he had been disciplined heavily, but no one searched for why he engaged in increasingly negative behavior just to get noticed.

It is not just the acting-out child or the clown who should be of concern to the elementary school counselor but the quiet ones too. When implementing their comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling programs (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000; Myrick, 1997), school counselors must seek to provide services for all children, not just the noisy ones. The hero and the invisible child are often quiet and withdrawn children who get overlooked as "good kids" because they are not drawing negative attention to themselves. The very fact that an elementary school student is exhibiting quiet and withdrawn behavior should be an indicator to the counselor that the student may be in need of support. These heroes and invisible children (Black, 1981) may never get referred to the school counselor because they create the appearance of being highly functional and in control of their lives. It is difficult to discern whether these students are highly functional and quiet or if they are masking their COA symptomatology. They are often ultraresponsible school counseling office aides who are very helpful to school counselors in constructing bulletin boards and working on special projects. The counselor may never see their generosity and helpfulness as a cry for help.

Undoubtedly, the issues in dealing with COAs are complex. Being children, they are often unable to accurately identify their stressors and have little power to change the circumstances of their environment. They also may believe that they are the cause of their alcoholic parent's drinking because they are often told this by the parent. Unfortunately, developing this erroneous attitude about themselves may lead them to believe that they do not deserve to be helped or supported. Confounding the issue is the fact that school counselors, teachers, and staff may have their own erroneous preconceptions about alcoholism. All of these factors make it necessary that school counselors take a multifaceted approach to helping and supporting COAs.

Schools are large political and educational systems within which elementary school counselors cannot operate in isolation. Strong comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling programs have at their foundation the belief that program implementation is the responsibility of the entire school and that developmental guidance is integrated into the total educational process (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000; Myrick, 1997). To get the job done, this systemic approach to helping COAs used a broad range of services and personnel, including the child, the family, the school system, community agencies, and their related personnel and services.

In this chapter, we look at the major school counselor services present in an effective comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling program. We discuss the 4C's of school counseling—consultation, curriculum, collaboration/coordination, and counseling (Schmidt, 1991)—and apply them to the provision of services for COAs.

CONSULTATION

One facet of school counselors' varied roles is to function as consultants to administrators, parents, teachers, and community agencies. Elementary school counselors have the prerequisite skills needed for effective communication, including communication and problem-solving skills, ethical professional behaviors, knowledge base of child development and child-related issues, and the ability to provide the necessary core facilitative conditions for positive relationships (Engels & Dameron, 1990).

Because of ongoing relationships with teachers and staff regarding multiple student-related issues, elementary school counselors have, by and large, earned the respect of teachers in being able to provide them with assistance for troubling cases. The family-type atmosphere typical in elementary schools creates opportunities for team approaches that are ideal for dealing with the complex issues of COAs. It is imperative in consultation for the consultant not to be expected to "fix" the child or to merely advise and direct the consultee. Consultation services for COAs could include faculty and staff training on early detection of the symptoms of COAs (Robinson & Rhoden, 1998) or basic training on the counseling referral process. Using a faculty meeting to show a relevant film about COAs such as Claudia Black's film *Roles Children Play in Alcoholic Families* is very worthwhile. Tip sheets can be developed to help teachers and principals more readily identify COAs as such rather than as behavioral problems.

When consulting with teachers, elementary counselors can emphasize that those children who appear withdrawn, invisible, and perfect are often just as needy as those who are the "squeaky wheels." When meeting with teachers or with principals regarding specific children, the counselors can pay special attention to signs that a child may be a COA child. This would allow school faculty to attend to the COAs' unique needs and could assist them in making more appropriate referrals to the counselor. Increased awareness by the faculty and principal around issues related to

COAs and their behaviors can help them and other school personnel identify areas that may be hindering academic and social growth.

The primary goal of consulting with teachers is to better equip them to deal with COAs. Consultation should work to raise the teachers' awareness and skills to work with COAs rather than encourage them to refer cases to their counselor. Therefore, although the concerns of a particular child may be what brings a teacher to the counselor, an attitude of building the teacher's own confidence and competence in identifying and handling young COAs is the counselor's focus. Not only does this empower others who have more direct influence on children, but in these times of high elementary school counselor to student ratios it is a more efficient service delivery system.

Counselors can share some of their expertise on COAs by providing consultees with information about the most typical needs of these youths. These children are often subject to neglect, denied adequate protection and limit setting, and have limited access to positive role models. Helping teachers understand COAs' need for structure, consistency, trust, and protection can go a long way toward positive adjustment for these children. Modeling consistency, recognizing adaptive behaviors, and addressing social skill deficits are all constructive ways for teachers to assist with COAs. Teachers can be made sensitive to these children's need for control through decision making and for the need for a quiet work environment that may not be available at home for them to complete work.

Similarly, consultations with administrators can assist them with identification of COAs and can help them take a different approach with youths who act out. The major goal of consulting with administrators is to help them work through the process of analyzing and solving problems with "troubled" students in the school. Administrative support for helping COAs is essential for them to receive the help these children so desperately need within the school setting.

Consultation services can also be provided to parents. It is unrealistic to expect that an alcoholic parent would be willing to address or even acknowledge their alcoholism. However, codependent parents may be ready to seek assistance if school counselors broach the topic in a professional and sensitive manner. Codependent parents are unable to help their child or may be unaware that the child is suffering the negative effects of parental alcoholism. In our own experience as school counselors, we were often amazed at the number of parents who did not think their child was aware of the alcoholism in their home. This disease is, as Hastings and Typpo (1984) appropriately titled their book, the "elephant in the living room," with everyone pretending that it is not there.

Placing information regarding parental alcoholism in a "counselor's corner" of a newsletter, whether it is at the district, building, or even classroom level, can be helpful in getting some codependent parents to come and talk. Having handouts about COAs available at school open houses can be another consultation service. Displaying books, games, and kits to use with COAs can let parents know that counselors are willing and capable of dealing with this issue. This helps lessen the "don't talk, don't trust, don't feel" rule common in alcoholic families (Black, 1981) and lets parents know that counselors are educated about and prepared to deal with this issue.

Parents can also be reached through consultation with community agencies and services. The creation of brochures about counseling services and the development of simple risk factor index checklists can help parents decide how much their child is at risk for alcoholism. This is a subtle way of telling parents that they need to seek help.

Leaving these brochures and checklists at community agencies is helpful. It is also a good idea to target within the community places parents are likely to frequent and to leave these there as well. Some potential sources would be doctor's and dentist's offices, grocery stores, and hospital emergency rooms. Sending these checklists home to parents with a letter of information about a support group is also helpful, because alcoholic parents will likely read the letter, and it can help them understand the seriousness of the problem and may help break down their denial.

CURRICULUM DELIVERY

Beyond teaching basic academic skills, schools prepare children for adulthood and for life. Myriad curricular activities provided to students can help them develop positive attitudes about themselves and the world around them. These opportunities occur in the personal–social realm and are a legitimate service provided by elementary school counselors (Campbell & Dahir, 1997).

One good place to start in developing a comprehensive approach to services for COAs is with curriculum delivery. This service is generally conceptualized as part of a preventive approach. It can also be a way for school counselors to provide early identification, to promote specialized groups and services for these children, and to subtly provide direct service to COAs.

Guidance curriculum consists of planned sequential activities delivered in a systematic manner to meet the developmental needs of all students, not just a target population (Myrick, 1997). This is particularly important because alcoholism is still considered a shame-based issue even with the growing acceptance of it as a disease. This means that children might be unaware that alcoholism is at the root of family dysfunction, and the shame they may feel can prevent them from self-identifying as COAs. In addition, those children who play the invisible or hero role may appear to not need services and go unnoticed unless the counselor has regular contact with them in the classroom.

Prevention Component

The classroom environment is an ideal place to begin preventive programming for COAs. In this setting, trusting relationships have developed among children, and there is an educational atmosphere that makes it less threatening to the COAs. During these classroom meetings, school counselors can be on the alert for children who display signs of discomfort or the need for further exploration of COA issues. Numerous topics can be addressed within the classroom, including the affects of drugs and alcohol, parent–child relationships, and family dynamics.

Certainly, direct talk about what alcoholism is and how it affects families can be done, but this would be more appropriate for older elementary-age children and may be viewed as threatening to their denial and secrecy. More subtle approaches such as dealing with stress, anger, feelings, fears, and other similar emotions and topics might be more beneficial in getting young COAs to open up. One excellent activity from *Children Are People Too* (Hawthorne, 1990) is to have students choose either a mask or shield template. A lesson on inside and outside selves can be conducted in which students are asked to draw with words or pictures or both the self they show to others and what they are really feeling and thinking on the inside. This activity can help COAs learn that keeping their emotions internalized can make it more difficult for them to get the help they need.

There are a number of good films that depict COAs and that help children identify the source of their stress. One film that is used often is Rogers's (1983) *Lots of Kids Like Us* (Brigham Young University), in which a child who has a mother in recovery helps another child understand what alcoholism is and how it affects an entire family. Showing a film like this acts as a general discussion starter on why children seek support from school counselors. It is important when discussing a film like this that COAs not be embarrassed or ashamed in the classroom atmosphere. Counselors should be careful not to stigmatize children through public discussion. Focusing on the characters in the film rather than asking children to relate it to their own lives is a safe way to do this. It is also helpful if the counselors make a more causal reference to their services rather than make a direct request for children to join a COA group. For example, say, "If anyone would like further information about alcoholism and its effect on families or if you'd like to join a group to discuss this further, please leave your name and homeroom in my mailbox" (or with the school secretary). This is a safe way for school counselors to offer services. In this manner, no student is asked to admit parental alcoholism in public or to share this with the teacher. Robinson and Rhoden (1998) suggested that self-identification may be the most acceptable identification method, because it not only lessens stigmatization but also gives children power over their anonymity and a sense of psychological safety.

In addition, as a prior elementary school counselor, Phillips would often ask the head of the local county's Council on Alcoholism to be present during the showing of the film and would arrange for the person to have a conference room with an open door for the day. Children in fourth and fifth grades were told that they could arrange with their teacher to stop by to ask further questions. In this manner, the teacher was also able to assist with the promotion of joining a group and to make referrals to the school counselor for those students needing ongoing support.

There are many excellent sources for finding films and books. The school librarian is a good resource. Available on the market from American Guidance Services is a regularly updated series called *The Bookfinder*. This source lists books by both topic and reading level.

Intervention Component

Once the COAs are in treatment in the school, the classroom can become one method of direct service delivery. Topics such as identifying feelings, developing stress management/coping skills, and relaxation training benefit the young COAs. These topics also are ideal for the rest of the class for their overall development and personal growth. Activities that help children learn to trust their own perceptions can also be helpful because COAs often have difficulty differentiating between the truth and what they have been told to believe is true.

Once the children are divided into small groups, it is beneficial to discuss alcoholism as a disease to help lessen the COAs' anger at the drinking parent. In addition, children need to know that alcoholics can and do recover, thereby giving them hope. To lessen the shame and guilt associated with being a COA, counselors can provide books and films that discuss how parental alcoholism is not the child's fault.

There are numerous books available that serve as educational tools and ice breakers that are geared specifically to young COAs. Some examples of these educational tools include *My Dad Loves Me, My Dad Has a Disease* (Black, 1982), *An Elephant in the Living Room* (Hastings & Typpo, 1984), and *Children Are People Too* (Hawthorne, 1990). Furthermore, there are videos available that help young COAs to understand that they did not cause, cannot control, and cannot cure their parents' alcoholism (Black, 1981). Finally, the Children of Alcoholics Screening Test can be used as both a screening and a teaching device to help children understand how alcoholism has affected them and to come to understand the goals of an educational support group (Jones, 1983).

COLLABORATION/COORDINATION

One area in which counselors can collaborate with teachers is with the early identification of COA symptoms. Some COA symptoms include emotional withdrawal, aggressive behavior, and persistent absenteeism (Robinson & Rhoden, 1998). Asking teachers to be present during the showing of a starter film and having them trained in how to identify signs of children in distress are ways of collaborating with teachers. The films and training can take place during teacher in-services or in special training for which teachers would receive continuing education credit. Also, educating school personnel to better recognize COA symptoms can facilitate earlier and more appropriate referrals to the school counselor. Inviting a drug and alcohol counselor to attend the showing of an educational film and to collaborate with the training is also a good idea. Local drug and alcohol counselors can also assist in educating students about being a COA. They can listen for student comments that might be indicators of who are potential COAs and watch student reactions as well as be available for children to consult with following the film.

Working with community agencies is an excellent way to collaborate and coordinate services for COAs. Schools can become a site for a local Al-A-Tot or Al-A-Teen group. Children are more likely to attend these support groups at lunch or after school during activity/sports time because they do not have to worry about transportation or weekly discussions with their parent about attending. This sort of collaboration is essential to providing COAs with services they need to be successful.

Special events can be arranged similar to career fairs during which guests are invited to discuss various aspects of alcoholism. For example, one such fair might include a school nurse to discuss alcoholism as a disease, a counselor from the local clinic to discuss rehabilitation centers or ongoing counseling, and a local private counselor to discuss blackouts and fears common to COAs. The juvenile officer from the local police department could discuss safety and survival tips, and a recovering alcoholic also could discuss the hopeful aspects of this devastating disease. Special alcoholism awareness weeks or months can be planned to collaborate with community agencies. Topics can be varied and may include faculty training in the area of early identification, making a graffiti board where children can draw and write on topics around alcohol abuse prevention, such as "Get high on life: Things to do instead of drinking." The topics and activities are only limited by a counselor's imagination.

School counselors can collaborate with the overall school and area community to coordinate mentoring programs in which COAs can find the emotional support they need outside of the family. In one school in which Phillips worked, she arranged an in-school mentoring program called LINKS (Liking, Interest, Nearness, Kindness, Support) to which COAs could be referred. Master links (adults) volunteered to spend a minimum of two contacts a month with a youth for the entire school year. Repeat linkups were allowed, with some children spending 3 to 4 years with the same master link. The principal and the school counselor would often fill in for master links so they could meet with their student. Sometimes this meant that the counselor or principal would teach part of a class or monitor the cafeteria for an aide. All of the school staff were invited to volunteer in the LINKS program. Brief training sessions were held at the start of each school year to set the parameters for the adults and to provide information regarding abuse, neglect, and referral to the school counselor. In sum, mentoring is crucial for COAs to remain resilient because just one positive adult role model can help these children see themselves as successful and worthwhile (Benard, 1996).

In addition, the local community can also be used to provide mentors for children who have little emotional support at home. It is essential that these volunteers be carefully screened and be provided with training so that they do not overstep their boundaries or ignore important information related to the safety of the child that needs to be transmitted to the counselor.

Finally, it is important to collaborate with local agencies that specialize in treating individuals and families who suffer from alcoholism because elementary school counselors need appropriate referral sources for COAs. Knowing their fees, requirements, treatment strategies, and treatment opportunities can assist counselors with better referrals. Also, inviting people from the agency to the counselor's school is an effective way to build collaborative relationships and for them to be informed about the school's programs.

COUNSELING

Under stress and often without access to the help they need, COAs often struggle in their academic and personal–social lives. By knowing and understanding the symptoms associated with parental alcoholism, school counselors can begin to combat the negative effects. Unfortunately, by the time most COAs receive assistance, the symptoms (i.e., depression, anxiety, low self-esteem) are usually intense and well established. Therefore, it is crucial that COAs receive prevention and intervention services as early as possible. Research supports early intervention and recommends preventative efforts as early as preschool and kindergarten (Robinson & Rhoden, 1998).

Identification and Early Intervention

Robinson and Rhoden (1998) created a list of 10 behavioral and 10 psychological signs that may help school personnel pinpoint COAs. These indicators paired together with screening questions like the Family CAGE (Cut Annoyed Guilty Eye [Opener]; Price & Emshoff, 1997) or the Children of Alcoholics Screening Test (Jones, 1983) can help identify at-risk children.

Many researchers conclude that group counseling for COAs in schools is the best intervention because groups help reduce social isolation and negative emotions (shame, guilt, etc.) while increasing peer relations and a sense of belonging (Price & Emshoff, 1997). Groups provide a connectedness to other students that serves as a powerful protective factor, allowing children to remain resilient when faced with difficult life situations. In addition, groups allow the school counselor to reach many children simultaneously and has proved to be an effective use of time and resources. Based on the merits of the effectiveness of group counseling with COAs, a resiliency focused group intervention for COAs in the elementary school setting is suggested (Arman & McNair, 2000).

Setting Up the Group

Nine weekly sessions with six to eight members who are within 2 years of age difference is suggested. A small-group format helps children feel attended to and validated during each 30-minute session. The group should meet in a room that ensures privacy, as COAs often have difficulty trusting adults. In addition, sitting on the floor during group or providing stuffed animals for the children to hold creates a safe and comfortable environment.

Once potential group members are identified, parental informed consent must be obtained before the group can begin. We recommended that a direct approach be taken with the parent who the counselor believes will be most receptive. When describing the group, counselors should focus on the positive aspects of promoting resiliency and developing coping skills rather than the parental drinking. The next step is to begin the group.

Session 1 In the first session, explain and establish the group structure so the children know what to expect. Let the children know when and where the group will meet, how often the group will meet, and for how long the group will meet. Discuss why the group has been created and what the group will be doing. In addition, explain confidentiality and establish norms that will govern group interactions. Be sure to differentiate between confidentiality and secrecy, as COAs may be confused. Let the children help develop the group norms to instill ownership and promote group accountability. Openly display the written norms so they can be referenced later, and have each member sign them to demonstrate their commitment. Remind the children that group norms may be modified as the group progresses.

Session 2 Robinson and Rhoden (1998) outlined key points for working with COAs. These points can be used to help educate COAs about alcoholism. Some of the key points include the following: Alcoholism is a disease; everybody gets hurt in the alcoholic family; children whose parents drink too much are not alone; and children do not cause, cannot control, and cannot cure their parents' alcoholism. Discussion of these points will help to normalize and validate the children's experiences. Allow enough time for children to respond and react to each one. These points should also be openly displayed on a board or a poster.

Session 3 Reiterate the main points of the first two sessions by having the children take turns reading the group norms and key points on alcoholism. Also, take time to check in with the children to see how things are going at home. Reviewing the key points and checking in should preface the start of every group session.

Next, provide a variety of mediums (crayons, finger paint, etc.) and have the children create a picture of their family. When finished, invite volunteers to share their picture. As members describe their pictures, help them become more aware of the situations that create anxiety. Explore their thoughts pertaining to their family as a whole and to individual family members. When dynamics common to alcoholic families are revealed, link other students' experiences to those situations. Sharing their similarities will help build group cohesion. This activity will help facilitate the disclosure of content and encourage children to share their experiences. Keeping focused on content is less stressful and helps prepare the children for exploring their emotions in the following sessions.

Sessions 4 and 5 The objective of the fourth and fifth sessions is to identify how alcoholism affects children. Use information shared in previous sessions to further explore the children's emotional reactions to living with alcoholism. For example, while explaining his family portrait, a student may mention how his mom lies in order to pacify his alcoholic father. Ask how that situation makes other group members feel. What do they do when they feel that way? If the children have difficulty examining their reactions, role play the situation using puppets or stuffed animals to bring the experience into the present. Puppets often provide children with a safe means of exploring emotions, especially ones they find confusing.

When the children process their emotional responses to alcoholism, they become more aware of how they are affected. Remember to validate and normalize their reactions. The purpose is to move the children from exploring the content to exploring the process of the situation. These sessions will help resolve unexpressed emotions and heighten their sense of control over future situations.

Session 6 The objective of the sixth session is to bring the children back into a cognitive process by identifying existing coping skills and creating new ones. Review the situations discussed in previous sessions and focus on how the children responded. How did their thoughts and feelings affect their behavior? What could they have done differently? Brainstorm alternative responses, focus on solutions, and role play using puppets or stuffed animals to work through these new responses. The purpose is to help the children understand that they can control and choose how they respond to stress. Practicing new ways of dealing with stressful situations using the puppets will help them be more assertive and express themselves more clearly.

Session 7 Continue talking about how the children can cope with alcoholism by developing a list of specific coping skills based on work in the previous session. Emphasize that coping skills are like a shield that protects them from alcoholism, increasing their resiliency in difficult situations. What can they do to protect themselves? What will make their shield stronger? Spending the first half of the session exploring and recording these skills makes them more concrete.

During the last half of the session, have each child make a shield out of baking clay. Allow the children freedom of expression when shaping their shield. Creating the shields and painting them in the next session will serve as a visual reminder of what they have learned and instill a sense of individuality and uniqueness.

Session 8 Spend the first half of the session painting the shields. Have the students paint their shields with words, symbols, and designs to represent what they learned from the group that will help protect them from alcoholism. After painting, allow the children to explain their shield. The purpose of this session is to help the children solidify their thoughts and feelings about the group. The shield will be a reminder of the progress they have made and the skills they have learned. Let the children know that they can continually add to their shield, that it can never be too strong.

Session 9 Finally, the children should be given adequate time to process the termination of the group. Termination should be mentioned in the last few sessions so the children are not surprised. Help the children understand that while the group will no longer meet formally, the relationships and support that were developed are long lasting. Be sure they understand termination is a natural step in their growth and development, like when training wheels are no longer necessary when riding a bike.

Furthermore, let them know that you look forward to hearing from them in the future. Plan a group reunion later in the school year so that the members have a chance to meet again.

In addition, take time to evaluate the effectiveness of the group by soliciting feedback from the children, their teachers, and their parents. Schedule a brief conversation period or create an evaluation form so that the children, and those who know them best, have the opportunity to share their opinion of the group.

Alcoholic families are closed systems that are difficult to penetrate. The greatest challenge in starting a COA group will be gaining parental support. However, research shows that COAs desperately need help. This group model is but one way to help COAs develop the resiliency and coping skills needed to survive in an alcoholic home. It is our belief that the school counselor is in an ideal position to take a proactive approach and reach out to these children.

SUMMARY

A multilayered approach to providing school counseling services to COAs is essential because alcoholism creates a variety of issues and concerns for these children. Our society still places a stigma on alcoholism; therefore, providing COAs with services within the elementary school setting requires that the school counselor have full knowledge of district policy on this matter. We suggest that school counselors carefully consider instituting intervention activities on this topic only after receiving written administrative support.

Providing services for COAs requires highly developed counselor skills and specific knowledge regarding alcoholic family systems and group dynamics. Additionally, as many elementary school counselors may be adult COAs themselves, they must be attentive to their own issues around alcoholism. Counselors who are embarking on providing intervention services for young COAs may need to first receive their own counseling to address unresolved issues from their past. These counselors may find it beneficial to attend a support group such as Al-Anon or Adult Children of Alcoholics. Children need adult role models who are strong and resilient and not easily overwhelmed with their own issues or the pain of the children.

This chapter discussed how a elementary school counselors can work with COAs with the framework of the 4C's: consultation, curriculum, collaboration/coordination, and counseling. Elementary school counselors are responsible for their school's comprehensive guidance and counseling programs that address the academic, vocational, and personal–social needs of the students. It is assumed that treating the personal–social needs of COAs will prepare them to be better students and more responsible adults. The ideas presented in this chapter are based on our practical experience and current literature in the field of study regarding working with COAs in elementary schools. School counselors wishing to implement the ideas in this chapter should pay special attention to how they inform parents when working with the COAs on issues related to alcoholism. School counselors should also be aware of the incredible resistance in terms of denial and secrecy when dealing with COA issues. It is clear that COAs are in need of help and school counselors are in a position to provide this help. The use of a multilayered approach that reaches these children through consultation, curriculum, collaboration/coordination, and counseling interventions is strongly suggested.

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Chapter 11

COUNSELING ISSUES AND PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN OF DIVORCE

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ALTHOUGH THE DIVORCE RATE IN THE United States has stabilized over the past two decades of the 20th century, currently one half of all American first marriages end with divorce. In addition, one of four children, or 25%, in the United States younger than 18 years of age lives with one parent only (usually their mothers). Over 12% of these children live with their fathers, and an additional 3% live apart from both mother and father. The impact of divorce is felt differently for children of different ethnicities and socioeconomic statuses. Divorce leads to other changes in a child's living conditions that may become obstacles to healthy growth (Tucker et al., 1997). Many problems associated with divorce are related to single parenthood and the reduction of income often created by divorce or separation.

Many social problems for children confronting American society today stem from poor socialization during the formative years, and while not all children of divorce are at risk for negative consequences, a disproportionate number are because generally their development tends to be less well socialized (or at least socialized differently). Children of divorce tend to spend an average of 6 of their first 18 years living with one parent, who generally must be employed. Over 60% of divorced parents remarry, forcing children to adapt to often-greater stresses than those found in the single-parent home. Adapting to a reconstituted family is recognized as an enormous stress on children. One half of second marriages, in turn, end up in a second divorce.

Interdisciplinary research efforts continue to identify key factors in children's adjustment to the divorce process (Belsky, Steinberg, & Draper, 1991; Hetherington, Cox, & Cox, 1986; Portes, Lehman, & Brown, 1999; Portes, Smith, & Brown, 2000; Wallerstein, 1984, 1991; Wolchik, Sandler, Braver, & Fogas, 1986). Many of these studies focus on processes affecting children's adjustment, whereas others focus on static factors such as socioeconomic status or ethnicity. Many attempt to provide recommendations for parents, teachers, and counselors in working with this special population of children. Even so, many questions remain, such as why some children are and continue to be more negatively affected than others.

The complexity of our research reflects the complicated network of sociopsychological factors that influence the child of divorce and may lead to short-term difficulties. Sociopsychological factors shaping the experiences of children of divorce are examined in this chapter, the purpose of which is to provide school counselors and other educators with a framework within which to conceptualize how children's adjustment and development are affected by parental divorce. In addition, the nature of divorce adjustment programs and their methodology are discussed along with some of the questions that remain open in the field. Finally, recommendations for counselors and educators are discussed throughout the chapter.

CURRENT CONCEPTUAL MODELS

A review of the literature on divorce suggests various conceptual models. Current studies focus more on pre- and postdivorce parental functioning than earlier ones, which were based primarily on demographic or marker variables of age, sex, and socioeconomic status (Desimone-Luis, O'Mahoney, & Hunt, 1979). According to current models (Brown, Portes, & Christensen, 1989; Kurdek, Blish, & Siesky, 1981), children's adjustment to divorce is mediated primarily by the following:

1. the macrosystem (cultural beliefs, values, and attitudes surrounding family life);
2. the predivorce microsystems (interaction with family and other agents);
3. the ontogenic system (the child's psychological competencies and coping skills);
4. the exosystem (the socioemotional supports available to the child during and after divorce); and
5. the postdivorce custody-related conditions, including the parents' own adjustment.

Interactions among these factors are considered most likely to account for variations in children's adjustment, yet little is known about their relative importance. The problem is further confounded by the sex and age differences of children in adjustment to divorce. For example, it appears that children may have different experiences based on their social and cognitive development at the time of the divorce.

A BRIEF HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF DIVORCE EFFECTS ON THE FAMILY

The major life stress imposed by divorce on children must be conceptualized in terms of how the family setting and the functions of families are actually affected or undermined by divorce. A change in the persons that occupied the traditional family, the daily routines, the goals and beliefs, and, often, the new demands posed by financial hardship precipitate a crisis for all involved. In a recent study of family functioning (Portes et al., 2000), the traditional roles and rituals in the postdivorce family unit that were preserved were indicative of child adjustment. So were consistent visitation patterns. Indeed, children are negatively affected by irregular visits from the noncustodial parents and are better off with no visitations at all, unless the visitations are consistent and predictable. In custody cases, this means that family courts should strive to reduce undue shifts of personnel or physical location for children as long as they are doing well in the original setting. The conflict experienced by children as they learn and develop social skills is an essential predictor of child adjustment. Parents who remain locked in conflict long after the granting of a divorce often produce the most maladjusted children.

In the model presented in this chapter, parents' own emotional adjustment and behavior during this period represents another critical predictor of child adjustment. Parents need help in understanding how their children are learning to resolve conflict and problems. The child of divorce is pictured generally as at risk for myriad emotional and psychological problems across his or her life span (Amato, 1993; Frost & Pakiz, 1990; Hetherington, 1991; Wyman, Cowen, Hightower, & Pedro-Carroll, 1985). Families experiencing divorce are thrown into a state of rapid flux, and this often leaves parents preoccupied with their own conflicted feelings and adjustment without sufficient resources to provide adequate support for the children.

In some families, parental conflict does not end with the divorce, and families make repeated trips to court to settle issues such as visitation, child support payments, and child-rearing concerns. Often, children are caught between parents, are triangulated into the conflict, and are sometimes pressured to choose sides (Amato, 1993). The needs of some of these families are often not adequately met by courts of law. Unfortunately, children's welfare often comes second to the misguided feuding of uninformed and angry parents. Children rarely have a voice in these matters or circumstances. However, there is some evidence that parental divorce can have positive consequences for some children. The paradox lies in that stressful experiences in general contribute toward what is currently termed resiliency or invulnerability (Felner, Stolberg, & Cowen, 1975; Garmezy, 1991; Garmezy, Masten, & Tellegen, 1984; Masten, Best & Garmezy, 1990). Children of divorce may mature faster and become more responsible as they help their parents and siblings.

MEDIATORS OF ADJUSTMENT

In the research on the impact of divorce on children, several mediating variables have been identified. Apparently, many children learn to adapt, and as many succeed in overcoming the difficulties imposed by parental divorce as those who do not do so. However, the most persisting factors affecting children remain in the quality and consistency of parental support, particularly before the divorce and support systems after the divorce (Portes et al., 2000). The significant predictors found in our studies also include family roles and rituals after divorce and consistency in custody arrangements. Gender differences appear to be of minimal importance.

AGE AND RESIDUAL EFFECTS

Wallerstein (1984) discovered different patterns of adjustment among different age groups. Children ages 3 to 5 years of age experienced self-blame, fear of losing their parents, and fear of being replaced by another child. They coped with divorce through denial, fantasies of reunification, regression, and increased or decreased aggression. Children ages 6 to 8 experienced less self-blame but still experienced fear of abandonment, conflicted loyalty, loneliness for the absent parent, and sadness. They too coped through fantasies of reunification. Children ages 9 to 12 were better able to cope with stress without regression; however, they tended to display intense anger to conceal their sadness and helplessness, have more somatic complaints, and use defensive denial to manage their sense of rejection and loneliness. Children ages 13 to 18 experienced anger, regression, and loyalty conflicts and had concern about their own marriage plans. Some of these children were more sexually active, and some advanced in their level of maturity.

Overall, the study found age-related response patterns that indicate that one group is not "better off" than another. Although younger children tend to react more globally and intensely, age seems less influential in predicting adjustment than the parent–child relationship and overall quality of life (Wallerstein, 1984). Wallerstein, Corbin, and Lewis (1988) found that children ages 9 to 18 had more trouble adjusting than younger children ages 2 to 6. The conclusion was that the older children had clearer memories of the difficult transition and had more worries about their own future relationships.

Zill, Morrison, and Coiro (1993) examined longitudinal data from the National Survey of Children on a national sample of children born between 1965 and 1970 to determine if the effects of parental divorce persist past childhood. Sixty-five percent of these 18- to 22-year-old children from disrupted families had poor relationships with their fathers and 30% with their mothers. Forty percent had received psychological help and 25% failed to complete high school. Even after controlling for socioeconomic differences and other demographics factors, children whose parents have divorced were twice as likely to experience these problems as those from intact families.

Some inconsistencies in the literature regarding the importance of age in predicting adjustment appear noteworthy. Some studies indicate that problems increase with age, whereas others asserted that older children were better off (Forehand, Wierson, Thomas, & Fauber, 1991). Although older children may be less vulnerable initially because they have a more sophisticated understanding of the complexities of adult relationships and may be experiencing relief from the reduction in conflict, adolescence also contributes to their sense of alienation.

Palosaari and Aro (1994) found depression was more prevalent in all age groups experiencing divorce than for adult children from intact families. In sum, it appears that divorce signals the presence of a stressful challenge that affects the nature of socialization and that conjures a complex of at-risk conditions surrounding the child. Healthy social adaptation to the latter conditions determines the extent to which children become resilient.[1] If children become fearful, even terrified, of abandonment by both parents, as adults they may feel apprehensive about marriage and family.

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[1] It is also difficult to synthesize the research on age because the studies are inconsistent in how they demarcate the age groups. "Older" children in one study could easily comprise "middle-range" children in another. Wallerstein, Corbin, and Lewis (1998) released the first report from a 25-year study on the long-term impact of divorce on children. Focusing on the youngest cohort at the time of divorce, those 2 to 6 years of age, Wallerstein et al. asserted that a perspective shift is needed in how parents, mental health professional, and the courts view the impact of divorce on children. Using data gathered from the youngest children in the study, adults who were now between the ages of 27 and 32, they showed how divorce is a cumulative experience for children, presenting an impact at each developmental level that the child reaches. Although this study has been criticized for its restricted sample of mainstream families from Northern California and its subjective method, it still presents important information about those experiencing parental divorce firsthand.

They lack role models of healthy couples and may suffer from fears of abandonment and betrayal by significant others.

GENDER, CONFLICT, AND ADJUSTMENT

Research on gender differences in adjustment remains inconclusive. Many researchers suggest that boys have more difficulty adjusting to divorce than do girls, although the reasons given for this vary. Boys and girls may be adjusting to divorce stress differently. Boys are more likely than girls to act out in ways that coincide with diagnostic categories, and thus are more likely to come to the attention of psychotherapists. Therefore, it is possible that boys and girls suffer comparably, but girls internalize their stress more and are protected more by having generally a same-sex parent available. Some children manifest difficulties in establishing stable relationships later in life. Doherty and Needle (1991) found that girls demonstrate difficulties prior to the time of parental separation and do not decline thereafter. Boys, however, demonstrate difficulties after the divorce and do decline afterward. The researchers found indications of poorer school performance and increased substance use for boys but not for girls.

Although functional marriages by definition remain intact, not all dysfunctional marriages end up in divorce. Considerable evidence suggests that marital turmoil has a greater effect on boys than girls. Hess and Camara (1979), Hetherington, Cox, and Cox (1982, 1986), and Kempton, Armistead, Wierson, and Forehand (1991) are among those who have noted that boys are significantly more likely to exhibit signs of stress and aggression and that social relations and work effectiveness are more likely to suffer for boys than girls. Johnston, Kline, and Tschann (1989) found that boys are more likely to be caught in parental conflict and are vulnerable to maladjustment. Emery (1982) reported that marital turmoil is associated directly with undercontrol in boys, whereas for girls it is associated with overcontrol. Because undercontrolled (acting-out) behavior is more likely to be detected, it may be that boys respond to divorce in a more reactive, diagnosable manner than girls, who in turn are more likely to control behaviors and emotions. In our studies with nonclinical samples utilizing measures designed specifically for this population, gender differences in adjustment appear insignificant. It may be that as gender roles change and become more equitable, so do the consequences of parental separation.

If parental conflict were to have more adverse effects on boys than on girls (Amato, 1991; Lowery & Settle, 1985), this may be due to the stronger emotional bond between fathers and sons than fathers and daughters (Gecas & Swalbe, 1986; Hill & Holmbeck, 1987; Lamb, 1981). Sons are more likely than daughters to be disciplined by both parents (Mangolin & Patterson, 1975). Discipline may be more inconsistent when parental conflict exists. Parental conflict is, to a certain extent, a type of gender conflict. It seems to create more psychological stress for boys than for girls. Conflict may be conceptualized along a bipolar continuum with parental agreement and mutual validation at the other extreme. In sum, the literature is quite consistent in identifying ongoing parental conflict as an essential ingredient of poor adjustment, particularly after parental separation. Some researchers theorize that it is the high levels of conflict surrounding divorce and not necessarily divorce itself that leads to children's poor adjustment.

SO, ARE BOYS MORE MALADJUSTED THAN GIRLS?

One of the key issues in this field, as noted before, concerns whether male children of divorce do in fact experience greater maladjustment than female children. Perhaps a major concern exists in this area because, in general, boys seem more susceptible to maladjustment than girls. They tend to manifest more aggressive, maladaptive behavior, which is more likely to be classified in diagnostic categories (Dohrenwend & Dohrenwend, 1975). Whether divorce affects a child differentially depending on the child's gender or simply adds stress equally on top of different levels of vulnerability remains an issue.

Observed sex differences in maladjustment appear intensified in divorced populations. They may vary because of preexisting conditions that are independent of the divorce process. It may be that divorce stress affects boys and girls equally and can be regarded as a stress "constant" in any attempt to assess vulnerability.

Most of the literature on sex differences in psychopathology is based on actual referrals for agency intervention and not surveys of children's adjustment—something that may influence the conclusions (Hyde, 1990; Zaslow, 1989). It appears that boys' responses to stressful situations are more likely to call for parental intervention than girls' reactions. In addition, boys are considered more treatment-resistant. Gardner (1987a, 1987b) attributed a high treatment failure rate for boys and a high success rate for girls in mental health agencies to sex role stereotypes that create bias in the treatment provider.

Findings from two of the most authoritative research programs in the field (Portes et al., 1999, 2000; Wallerstein & Corbin, 1989) suggest that no significant gender differences persist in overall psychological adjustment. For girls, a delayed or "sleeper" effect is characterized by the emergence of intense anxieties that may have been repressed during earlier development. A constrained close mother–daughter relationship was found in the latter study, although the method used prevents generalization of these findings. It may be that although stress is present for both boys and girls, the reaction may be sex differentiated. For example, the reaction may depend on antecedent factors as well as psychobiological maturation. When parental conflict and animosity are maintained following divorce, girls, as well as boys, tend to manifest emotional and behavioral maladjustment (Johnston et al., 1989; Portes, Haas, & Brown, 1991). However, it may be that girls generally count on greater support by having a same-sex parent to support them through the crisis. It appears then that divorce does not have an impact more on one sex than the other, but rather the impact and outcomes are manifested differently, depending on a variety of contextual and developmental factors.

CUSTODY ISSUES

Once a divorce agreement has been reached and children are worked into various custody arrangements, a second phase of the adjustment process begins anew. In some cases in which parents are able to deal with the end of their marital relationship amicably, both parents often strive to maintain as much contact with children as possible. Ideally, parents put aside many of their interpersonal issues and focus on the well-being of their children. They ensure that children feel they can have access to them and capitalize on other support systems. Instead of resenting the presence of a "significant other" in the lives of the mother or father, both parents make an effort to get along so that the children experience a gain rather than a loss in personnel. Though rare, the above pattern of custody arrangement is the smartest for all involved (Portes, 1998).

We consider this type of divorce resolution the most successful custody pattern given its focus on meeting children's socioemotional needs. When divorced parents, and stepparents, are able to maintain cordial relationships, rules are usually applied consistently across households. Such family settings attempt to be as flexible as possible, while maintaining as much consistency in routines as possible. Other custody patterns tend to be less healthy for children, particularly when one or both parents remain dysfunctional. As noted earlier, irregular visitations are more damaging to children than no visitations at all. In between the two extremes above, other patterns prevail, yet the best organizing principle for assessing what is in the best interest of children's health is simple. Whatever the pattern may be—weekends, summer, or holiday visitations— the logic is to ensure children's growth needs are given priority over parental needs "to have their children."

Wallerstein and Lewis (1998), following a group of children of divorce for 25 years, found that children who were forced to comply with court-ordered visitation schedules or unmodified parental agreement schedules, and who were allowed no input of their own, experienced a deterioration in the relationship with the noncustodial parent, generally the father. This subgroup experienced intense anger toward their father during and after childhood when the visitation schedules were strictly enforced. In most cases, these schedules were established when the children were quite young and did not allow for flexibility as the children reached different developmental stages. The children perceived this as another loss of control and power in their lives. Although the intent of such schedules was to promote a close relationship between father and child, it had the opposite effect, one which is associated with depression.

DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS FOR CHILDREN AFTER DIVORCE

Below we present some of the main tasks children must be helped to resolve as they confront the transitions into a new family structure.

Task 1: Accepting Parental Separation

Children must be helped to understand that parents sometimes choose to end the marriage knowing the changes it will bring to the family. Depending on their age and maturity, children will need clear, accurate information to prepare them for changes to come and to accurately perceive that their parents will still love them and that they can survive the immediate changes divorce brings. It is important for them to distinguish between imagined fears of being abandoned or feeling they have to renounce their parents.

Task 2: Individuality

To get on with their own lives as quickly as possible and return to the normal tasks of growing up is essential after parental divorce for all, particularly children. Children should actively remove themselves emotionally from parental conflict. They need to safely develop their identities and self-esteem in extended family settings. Parents with others' help should plan to foster childrens' positive identities.

Task 3: Dealing With Loss

Children must be helped to overcome divorce-related losses and move beyond the initial denial-related attempts to save the marriage. Sometimes they face the loss of one parent, usually the father, from their lives. They must conquer feelings of self-blame for causing the divorce.

Task 4: Dissolving Anger and Guilt

Children often feel anger at being hurt by the persons they depended on for protection and love. The task here is to recognize parents are human and capable of making mistakes. Instead of anger, they need to explore empathy and respect for others too. Young children often feel responsible for divorce, thinking they may have caused the divorce. They need to understand it is natural to feel sad when parents go on with their own separate lives.

Task 5: Developing a Future Perspective and Other Intellectual Skills

Children's ability to see past the present pain and accept the reality of a new situation varies by age. Young children can be devastated and must be helped to see the future positively. They need to learn that eventually the hurt will not be as bad and that things do get better over time. Young children's thinking tends to be concrete from age 7 on and they cannot think "as if" unless they are helped. Younger children often are not logical in their thinking, so consistent guidance and good communication are essential to developing more rational thinking.

Task 6: Reestablishing Trust and Self-Esteem

Before children can take a chance on depending again on others, it is essential they become strong emotionally and feel positive about who one is, regardless of the divorce. Trust must be a priority, and before intimate, long-term relationships can be successful, trust in others must be developed. This trust in relationships becomes relevant when a divorced parent plans to date or remarry.

The following are some counseling suggestions for parents to help their children handle parental dating and remarriage:

1. Discuss with children when they are old enough the parent's plans to date, how the children would feel, pros and cons, and traits to look for in a parent's prospective partner.
2. Know the new romantic partner fairly well before arranging for him or her and the child or children to spend time together.
3. Allow the child to get used to this person gradually, at the child's own pace.
4. Keep the child informed about the relationship, but do not force the child to make decisions about it.
5. Involve the child in plans regarding living arrangements, marriage, and other important changes in an appropriate manner.
6. Seek agreement with the new partner in establishing consistent parenting practices.

PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN OF DIVORCE

It is clear that children suffer varied and sometimes intense after-effects from the divorce of their parents. Studies indicate that children may experience higher rates of depression, anxiety, or other emotional problems. Many lose important relationships with one of their parents. They may also have shorter life expectancies and achieve lower economic status than their parents. They are more likely to experience divorce in their own marriages. In recognition of this and related problems, many districts across the United States have established divorce counseling programs. These programs are varied, and not all of them include a component for children, although most attempt to aid in children's adjustment even if indirectly. Much is still not known about how best to help children, especially when it comes to identifying those who may be most at risk.

Postdivorce parental conflict is associated with increased parental litigation over such issues as visitation, child support, and poor child adjustment (Braver, Salem, Pearson, & DeLuse, 1996). Of the 102 programs surveyed by Braver et al. (1996), 56% have some form of mandatory referral, either for newly divorcing parents or divorced parents who are relitigating. Almost half of all programs were operated by private, nonprofit agencies, and another one third were run by courts or court-related services. Mandatory programs were more likely to be court-run than voluntary programs. Nearly 60% of programs consist of a single session. There is heavy use of supplementary materials, such as workbooks, manuals, suggested reading lists, and handouts. Seventy-three percent of all programs use videotapes as part of the presentation. Most programs reported using two facilitators. More than two thirds of programs require facilitators to have an advanced degree as well as special training in the area of divorce education (Braver et al., 1996).

The disparity among program structures is great. For example, a few counties in Georgia, Florida, Indiana, Missouri, New York, and Ohio require divorce "classes" that range from 25-minute videotape discussions to 4-hour seminars. These programs are typically held in the courthouses for parents only, with group sizes ranging from 50 to 75 participants (Brown et al., 1989).

Although courts have recently become more involved in requiring family participation in counseling programs, in most cases the programs are inadequate in some fundamental way. Some deficient programs include those that do not involve the parents, do not focus on reducing parental conflict, do not develop coparenting skills, or do not develop support for both parents and children (Brown et al., 1989). Research has indicated that early intervention in addition to ongoing support is the best strategy for the prevention of long-term negative impact. Therefore, it would seem that participation in a comprehensive counseling and support program is of paramount importance. Unfortunately, there is a lack of definitive findings in the literature that lend support to the effectiveness of such programs. The reasons for this include the lack of systematic and methodologically sound program evaluations and the relatively short amount of time that these programs have even been in existence. This precludes the determination of long-term effectiveness.

Of equal, if not greater, importance is the need for early identification of children who are at the greatest risk for long-term maladjustment to divorce. Individuals respond to stresses differently, and two children in the same situation may present entirely different pictures of mental and emotional health as adults. As a preventive measure, the early identification of the child at greatest risk may save him or her time, money, and suffering for the rest of his or her life.

It is becoming more common for courts to require families to participate in counseling in an effort to help them cope with divorce and to make them more aware of the impact of divorce on children. The reasons are many. It is generally recognized that divorce is stressful to children and that continued parental conflict is linked to poor adjustment. Also, postdivorce parental conflict is associated with increased parental litigation over such issues as visitation, child support, and poor child adjustment (Braver et al., 1996). Divorce education programs attempt to prevent these problems from arising or escalating.

Braver et al. (1996) surveyed the goals and content of 102 programs, noting that 60%–75% consisted of a single session, rarely two. They found that the goals ranged from modest (purely educational) to ambitious (psychoeducational, reducing children's symptoms of maladjustment). There were consistent themes, however, among these programs about the areas that were and were not most intensely covered. The content areas that were covered most intensely were the areas of addressing children's needs and the impact of parents' behaviors on their children. This was consistent with many of the programs' missions, which were often reflected in the programs' names (e.g., Focus on Children, Children Cope With Divorce).

Areas that were given moderate coverage included information and skills training for parents. In this category, the focus appeared to be on conflict management and parenting skills. The least amount of coverage was given to legal issues, including custody options, financial issues, parents' rights, and information on navigating the legal system. Only 15% of programs used legal professionals as presenters in the sessions. Most often, the presenters were counselors or psychologists.

Although all programs probably help ease the negative impact of divorce on children, they may not address issues essential to children's divorce adjustment. Many programs fail to encompass components reported in the literature as being critical to children's adjustment. They include (a) involving the parent in the program, (b) strengthening the parent–child relationship, (c) reducing parental conflict, (d) developing coparenting skills, (e) developing an understanding of divorce in children, and (f) developing support for the parents and children (Brown et al., 1989).

In sum, the main areas for counselors to assist divorcing families center on the following:

1. Avoid assigning blame for the divorce or criticizing the other party in the child's presence.
2. Reassure the child that she or he did not cause the divorce and will continue to be loved and cared for by both parents.
3. Do not pretend that the divorce is "good," and do not expect the child to appreciate your reasons for the divorce.
4. Do not place the child on the spot by involving him or her in divorce-related decisions.
5. Keep the child informed about divorce-related events and decisions in a timely and frank manner.
6. Avoid making changes in the child's normal routines as much as possible.
7. Allow the child full freedom to express his or her feelings both to you and to the other trusted adults.

SUMMARY

As this chapter suggests, there is considerable evidence for school counselors and educators in general to be concerned about children of divorce. School counselors are often most able to support these children and adolescents dealing with adjustment-related problems in schools. It is important for counselors to be knowledgeable about this special population and the assessment methods that are available. School counselors are often called on to develop group programs for troubled children. In general, those children suffer from years of socialization in dysfunctional families, many of which are headed for parental divorce or long-term conflict. It is important for school counselors in the 21st century to be educated about working not only with children but also with how their minds are socially co-constructed, learning to engage parents in education programs and activities. Divorce education programs are not enough. Primary prevention efforts to educate children before they themselves become parents remain the most cost-effective strategy to reduce a host of social problems. It is most important to educate future parents, while they are still in school, about the consequences of conflict and related parenting practices. This topic will be expanded in future work with regard to rethinking the opportunities that a prevention approach and curriculum from the middle grades through high school could offer in the new century. School counselors need to be proactive in working with this at-risk group among others.

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Chapter 12

A REMEDY FOR BOYS WHO BULLY: A GENDER-EQUAL SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Elizabeth Clarke and Mark S. Kiselica

IN RECENT YEARS THE SUBJECT OF bullying in school settings has received increased attention in the counseling literature. Research indicates that bullying is a widespread problem affecting a substantial number of students and has been extensively studied in Scandinavia (Kaltiala-Heino, Rimpela, Marttunen, Rimpela, & Rantanen, 1999; Olweus, 1978), Western Europe (Arora, 1994; Boulton & Underwood, 1992; Sharp & Smith, 1991), Australia (Rigby & Slee, 1991), and the United States (Bosworth, Espalage, & Simon, 1999; Duncan, 1999; Hoover, Oliver, & Hazler, 1992; Perry, Kusel, & Perry, 1988). This research has contributed to the current understanding of important aspects of bullying behavior. Bullying has been found to have long-term negative consequences for both bullies and victims, and it negatively impacts their families as well as student witnesses. The characteristics of bullies, victims, and their families of origin have been studied by multiple authors. Strategies for helping victims and their families have been published (Hoover & Hazler, 1991; Roberts & Coursol, 1996), as have interventions with the bullies and their families (Hoover & Hazler, 1991; Oliver, Oaks, & Hoover, 1994). Finally, several authorities on the subject of bullying have suggested teacher education and policy measures designed to create a climate of safety for children and adolescents in school (e.g., Hoover & Hazler, 1991; Olweus, 1993; Remboldt, 1994a, 1994b; Ross, 1996; Sharp & Thompson, 1994).

These developments represent significant advances in our understanding about bullying. However, for the most part they address bullying in a vacuum, virtually ignoring the societal forces that shape school cultures, define traditional masculinity, and encourage bullying. Although bullying is clearly taking a toll on the educational and emotional development of a significant number of children, little has been done to systematically address the problem in elementary schools. In a previous publication on bullying (Clarke & Kiselica, 1997), we discussed some of the systemic forces found within school systems that may support bullying inadvertently, and we suggested schoolwide strategies that all school personnel could use to discourage the menacing behavior of bullies while helping victims. In this chapter, we go one step further and argue that effective interventions with bullies must include a critical analysis of the patriarchal, hierarchical society and confront the messages that boys receive from our culture. It is not enough to say "bullying is unacceptable." To be most effective, we need to understand that bullying behavior may be a direct result of normative male socialization. We also need to examine how schools reinforce the socialization of boys that is established in the larger society and how that traditional socialization may not be in boys' best interests.

We focus our attention in this chapter on boys who bully because research studies have found that boys bully significantly more than girls do (Bosworth et al., 1999; Boulton & Underwood, 1992; Kaltiala-Heino et al., 1999; Lane, 1989). Girls also bully, but they tend to use covert methods that are harder to detect and measure (Lagerspetz & Bjorkvist, 1994). The indirect bullying techniques that girls use are also not generally associated with bullying by adults and children. Further studies should focus on the characteristics of female bullying.

Throughout this chapter, bullying is defined as intentional, unprovoked, aggressive behavior that can be either verbal (threatening, humiliating, or degrading comments) or physical (hitting, pushing, holding, or hostile gesturing) and that is an abuse or assertion of power over another child. A victim is defined as an individual who is exposed repeatedly to bullying behaviors by one or more persons (Dawkins, 1995; Olweus, 1993).

THE SOCIALIZATION OF BOYS

An essential first step in determining the link between traditional gender expectations and bullying is to explore the ways in which boys are socialized. Gender roles are not so much biologically determined as socially constructed (Gilmore, 1990, as cited in Levant, 1995; Kindlon & Thompson, 1999; Kivel, 1999; Mac An Ghaill, 1994). The social constructs of traditional masculinity and femininity exist as polar opposites with mutually exclusive characteristics. Early in life, boys learn to identify the "feminine" as that which they define masculinity against (Lazur, 1987; Pogrebin, 1981; Pollack, 1998; Seidler, 1997).

A patriarchal culture establishes a hierarchy in which men are viewed as superior to women and, therefore, male and female roles must be clearly defined (Pogrebin, 1981). Gender stereotypes are roles assigned to males and females by the male-dominant group to secure and perpetuate the patriarchal system. Because males are considered more important under patriarchy, there develops an expectation that males must closely follow the strict male guidelines established or be seen as lesser, or feminine (Pogrebin, 1981). That the United States is a patriarchal culture may be a difficult concept to accept because of the American belief of total equality and democracy for all. Even though the United States is certainly more democratic than many countries, the White, heterosexual, middle-class male is the norm against which everyone else is compared. Anyone other than the norm is considered inferior. Patriarchy is so ingrained into American society that it is invisible. Even in the current popular literature that discusses the disadvantages of male gender stereotypes (Kindlon & Thompson, 1999; Pollack, 1998), patriarchy is not specifically named, despite the fact that the existence of gender stereotypes is axiomatic from the existence of patriarchy.

Historically, men have been asked to perform the roles of provider and protector, and in exchange for those demanding roles, men have been given increased status and privilege (Brooks & Silverstein, 1995). Because men were expected to give up their lives to protect society, they were taught to deny their authentic selves, to detach from painful emotions, and to deny the need for intimate relationships (Brooks & Silverstein, 1995). These expectations and behaviors are associated with a traditional model of masculinity.

Traditional male gender roles within a modern patriarchal society continue to hold boys to an impossible standard and severely limit their human experience. Four commonly cited components of the traditional male role are (a) No Sissy Stuff (avoidance of anything feminine), (b) the Sturdy Oak (emphasis on physical toughness and emotional stoicism), (c) Give 'em Hell (emphasis on being aggressive and forceful), and (d) the Big Wheel (emphasis on competition, achievement, and success; David & Brannon, 1976, as cited in Brooks & Silverstein, 1995). Learning how to be a "real boy" is not easy and must be practiced every day (Kindlon & Thompson, 1999; Pollack, 1998). Masculinity is not one test to be passed: It is a status that must be continually earned. Boys must constantly prove themselves and their masculinity by competing against their peers.

Although there is empirical evidence indicating that traditional gender roles for men are gradually being replaced by less stereotyped sex role standards (see Lamb, 1997), the pressure for boys to conform to traditional gender roles remains strong and can influence many boys to act in intolerant and maladaptive ways. For example, the social pressure on boys to be stereotypically "male" can be so great as to cause them to act in homophobic ways to cover their insecurities and fears. The fear of being thought of as gay keeps boys from forming emotionally supportive and physically affectionate friendships with other boys and creates a fear of emotional intimacy and physical contact. It is a powerful social control that contributes to the isolation many boys experience and serves to keep boys well within the limits of their gender roles (Pogrebin, 1981; Pollack, 1998; Seidler, 1997).

The cultural messages that boys receive through the media also reinforce traditional male stereotypes. Television shows and movies geared to boys perpetuate the traditional male stereotype by only showcasing men who fit that image (Eron & Huesmann, 1984; Pogrebin, 1981; Pollack, 1998). Media themes tell boys that the world is a violent place, that force is usually needed to solve problems, and that women are peripheral to the real action and only useful as the love interest (Pollack, 1998). Boys see men represented as heroes who are always at the center of action and attention, and so they learn that they are expected to be active, rowdy, and rambunctious (Eron & Huesmann, 1984; Lagerspetz & Bjorkvist, 1994).

Adults—both men and women—have internalized patriarchal standards and thus are so blinded by gender stereotypes that they fail to see the boy for the person he is. Conformity and tradition are more important than the child himself (Pogrebin, 1981; Seidler, 1997). Gender stereotypes are axiomatic from the existence of patriarchy, and until people challenge patriarchy and examine what stereotypes demand from American boys, there is no hope of ridding U.S. schools of bullying and other violence. If schools personnel are serious about ridding the schools of bullying behavior, they need to culturally redefine what it means to be masculine.

TRADITIONAL MALE STEREOTYPES AND BULLYING

We contend that the pressure some adults place on boys to adhere to a hyperaggressive image of masculinity may have a significant influence on bullying behavior and promote greater acts of violence in schools. Within the context of an ultracompetitive, winner-take-all culture in which boys are taught to be tough, emotionally stoic, and in control, it is no wonder that some boys turn to bullying behavior to make themselves look more masculine at other children's expense.

Contemporary boy culture tends to encourage obsessive competitiveness (Brooks & Silverstein, 1995; Kindlon & Thompson, 1999; Seidler, 1997). The hyperaggressive model of masculinity demands that boys prove their masculinity all the time and try to make themselves feel better at the expense of others (Kindlon & Thompson, 1999; Pogrebin, 1981; Seidler, 1997). "Within the competitive cultures of masculinity which have characterized industrial societies we have grown wary and suspicious of other men, feeling that they will put us down the moment that our defences are lowered" (Seidler, 1997, p.57). Extreme competitiveness also serves to keep boys separated from each other rather than connected to each other in any meaningful way (Kindlon & Thompson, 1999; Pollack, 1998; Seidler, 1987). This view is consistent with studies that show that bullies have high dominance needs (Olweus, 1994), enjoy being a bully (Batsche & Knoff, 1994), and choose to bully others to attain social position and to maintain control over others (Bosworth et al., 1999). Therefore, extreme competitiveness, which is a result of the male socialization process, is likely to support bullying behavior.

In addition to encouraging boys to be extremely competitive, some adults thwart the emotional understanding and expression of boys from an early age, with the exception of anger (Kindlon & Thompson, 1999; Kivel, 1999; Pollack, 1998; Seidler, 1997). Many boys are taught to avoid any behavior that might be perceived as "feminine," such as expressing tenderness, empathy, compassion, vulnerability, fear, and other normal human emotions (Brooks & Silverstein, 1995; Kindlon & Thompson, 1999; Kivel, 1999; Pollack, 1998; Seidler, 1997). Kivel (1999) and Pollack (1998) argued that some boys learn to hide from others what they perceive to be "feminine" until they eventually harden themselves against their own important emotions and tune out others' emotions as well. Similarly, Seidler (1997) stated that "so much of our transition from boyhood to manhood is clouded in fears of gayness that we often learn . . . to harden ourselves against our own sensitivity and tenderness" (p. 25). These pressures may explain why boys who are bullies tend to lack confidence in being able to use nonviolent strategies (such as talking out a disagreement; Bosworth et al., 1999), have high levels of anger (Bosworth et al., 1999), lack empathy (Olweus, 1994), and often misread their peers' actions by assuming hostile intentions when there are none (Lochman, 1992).

The roles of observation and instrumental learning are also important factors in the development of aggressive behaviors by bullies. Boys who are bullies tend to come from families who model and reinforce coercive, aggressive behavior (see Newman, Horne, & Webster, 1999). These boys are also exposed to societal messages that males who do not fight are "sissies" (Pogrebin, 1981). In light of these influences, it is not surprising that bullies have a positive view of fighting (Olweus, 1994) and are perceived by their peers to be disruptive and aggressive (Boulton & Underwood, 1992).

In summary, a deeply entrenched patriarchal system created and, to a great extent, still supports outdated and dysfunctional norms for male behavior characterized by competitiveness, homophobia, and hyperaggression. Although there are growing numbers of men who adhere to more healthy conceptions of masculinity, the persistence and pervasiveness of traditional views on masculinity continue to promote and support bullying by boys. Thus, the work of reducing bullying in schools must begin with a systemwide confrontation of the implicit and explicit messages boys are given about what it means to be a man.

SCHOOLS AS SOCIALIZING AGENTS

Contemporary school cultures reinforce the traditional male socialization messages that are being sent by the larger society (Kivel, 1999; Pollack, 1998). Pollack (1998) felt that the most basic, stereotypic gender behavior is acted out in classrooms. Most boys in school receive positive feedback when they conform to gender stereotype and are shamed when they do not (Pollack, 1998). When boys attack each other's vulnerabilities in the classroom, they learn to be wary of exposing their vulnerability in relationships and to be less trustful (Seidler, 1997).

School cultures foster competitiveness in academics and sports, which reinforce the traditional male characteristics of competitiveness, individualism, and insensitivity (Askew & Ross, 1988; Kivel, 1999). Kivel also stated that humans have always succeeded through cooperative efforts, but schools are among the institutions of society that are least characterized by cooperative activity.

When bullying occurs among children, statistics indicate that the school adults handle the situations either poorly or not at all (Boulton & Underwood, 1992; Hoover et al., 1992; Olweus, 1991, 1993, 1994; Roberts & Coursol, 1996). What children learn from the adults' handling of bullying incidents must be more frightening to them than the individual bullying incidents. The reluctance to deal with bullying may be due to the socialization of the school adults who believe that bullying is a necessary fact of childhood and that "boys will be boys." Newman et al. (1999) discussed cultural messages that support the tolerance of bullying, such as, "don't tattle," "stand up for yourself," and "mind your own business." The prevailing "boys will be boys" mentality allows us all to disregard behavior when it crosses the line from active to aggressive.

After every incident of horrific school violence, we as a society collectively wring our hands and wonder how we can deal with such a disturbing social problem. The answer may lie in the cultural expectations that schools transmit to the students, particularly the boys. If school personnel are truly serious about eliminating bullying in the schools, they may have to accept that the patriarchal hierarchy that underpins our society is detrimental to everyone and move toward a gender-equal society in which all individuals experience the freedom to be who they are, regardless of gender.

THE NEED FOR GENDER-EQUAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

The *New York Times* reported in May 1999 that the Bristol (Connecticut) Central High School was seeking a $108,000 federal grant to deal with student bullies ("Bristol Seeks," 1999). The grant was approved by the City Council after a survey of students identified bullying, threatening, and intimidating classmates as a major concern. In March 2000, the *New York Times* published an article on the increasingly violent nature of high school hazing incidents. According to the article, parents view hazing as a dangerous form of sadistic bullying and are starting to hold school officials accountable for the behavior of the students (Jacobs, 2000).

These articles are consistent with research that suggests that bullying behavior is increasingly being viewed as a precursor to more serious violence (Batsche & Knoff, 1994; Eron & Huesmann, 1984; Farrington, 1991; Lochman, 1992; Oliver et al., 1994; Olweus, 1978). At a time when educators are attempting to reduce the amount of violence in the schools, it would seem that efforts to confront bullying at young ages would be a natural and obvious first step.

In an earlier publication (Clarke & Kiselica, 1997), we suggested that schools adopt a systemic schoolwide intervention program, starting with kindergarten. We would like to amend that program to include a discussion of how adults allow and support bullying as a result of their own gender socialization within a patriarchal culture.

ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF A SCHOOLWIDE INTERVENTION PROGRAM

A variety of interventions to address bullying have been suggested throughout the counseling literature. Because space limitations preclude an in-depth discussion of each one, interested readers are referred to Garrity, Jens, Porter, Sager, and Short-Camilli (1994–1995), Johnstone, Munn, and Edwards (1992), Olweus (1994), and Remboldt (1994a, 1994b).

The problem with some antibullying programs is that the onus for change seems to placed on the student population, when actually the children are not in a position of power to change school values. Bully courts, shifting the balance of power from the bullies to the silent majority of students, and interventions for bullies, victims, and their families are certainly valuable, but we must look beyond the children and their family systems and examine how bullying behavior is reinforced and perpetuated by the values and attitudes inherent in the school culture.

Based on a synthesis of these scattered suggestions with our own experiences as consultants to schools with bullying problems, we recommend that any schoolwide intervention program contain the following components.

The Philosophical Component

Bullying will continue to be tolerated in schools until there is a philosophical shift among school personnel in how they view masculinity and how they view and respond to coercive behavior. According to Hoover and Hazler (1991), "school administrators, counselors, teachers, and everyone who works in the school must find ways to affirm their opposition to bullying publicly and to act on that opposition on a continuing and visible basis" (p. 216). The clear message sent by all the adults in the school should be that no bullying will be tolerated, ever. This message will be easier to convey if school personnel understand the male socialization process and how it supports bullying. In addition, part of this shift in philosophy must be a willingness by school administrators, teachers, and school counselors to honestly and unflinchingly examine their own internalization of gender stereotypes and their part in allowing and perpetuating bullying. Therefore, it is recommended that schools develop policies prohibiting bullying and a code of conduct dictating that all members of the school community act with respect for the human rights of each individual in the school (Sharp & Thompson, 1994). An implication of such a code is that school personnel must be models of humane behavior who refrain from physically or psychologically maltreating students or fellow school employees and who guard against making stereotypical assumptions about others on the basis of gender.

The Educational Component

Before the problem of bullying can be dealt with in an effective, consistent, and long-term way, school personnel need to realize that they have, to some degree, internalized the dominant stereotypes about boys and girls (Askew & Ross, 1988). Each school adult needs to determine the subtle messages he or she has sent out to students based on his or her own social worldview and to guard against future stereotypical assumptions that affect expectations of students. Traditional assumptions about boys' roles make it very easy to excuse bullying behavior as "boys will be boys." We propose that a skilled facilitator offer an abbreviated and modified gender role workshop (O'Neil & Carroll, 1988) to school administrators, counselors, teachers, and members of the Board of Education, in an effort to assess the individual impact of sexism and gender role socializations. This workshop would raise the degree of awareness the adults have about the negative outcomes of restrictive gender roles and sexism (O'Neil & Carroll, 1988). With this new awareness, bullying could be shown for what it is: a damaging and hurtful reflection of the male socialization process. If one is aware of how society socializes boys, one can change how one relates to them, which will allow the boys to maximize their potential while they are at school. Throughout the workshop, participants will also be educated about bullying behavior, the characteristics of bullies and victims, the new school code of conduct, and the procedures for responding to and reporting incidents of bullying. The goal of the workshop is to help school adults realize their own gender role experiences so they can create a gender-equal environment for the students in the school.

After the gender role journey workshop (O'Neil & Carroll, 1988), school officials will need to examine the school's management structure and sports culture to see what messages the children are receiving. School officials will also need to educate students and parents so that everyone can develop a better understanding about the distinction between acceptable and unacceptable behavior and how to respond when bullying occurs.

The Consistency Component

Unless policies pertaining to bullying are enforced consistently, other components of a schoolwide intervention may be undermined. Therefore, we recommend that sanctions be administered for all violations of the code of conduct, with no exceptions. If the students see that the child of the Board of Education member or mayor gets preferential treatment, they will not feel comfortable in reporting bullying. Also, teachers and other school adults will be less inclined to enforce sanctions if they are not consistently supported by the school administrators. It is also very important that rules are applied equally to boys and girls and that no double standard exists. Finally, if there are any disciplinary inconsistencies, the bullying situation for the victims may be worse than before the intervention.

The Adult Supervision Component

Olweus (1993) found that there is an inverse relationship between the number of supervising adults present and the number of bully/victim incidents. Consequently, it is recommended that schools increase the amount of adult supervision of school students provided throughout the entire school day. The supervising adults must be trained to act swiftly and decisively to deter aggressive behavior. It is advised that all school adults who might be in the position to supervise children take part in the gender role journey workshop (O'Neil & Carroll, 1988).

The Primary Prevention Component

Research indicates that childhood aggression is a factor associated with negative adolescent and adult outcomes for both bullies and victims. The *New York Times* articles mentioned earlier illustrate this point. In light of such information, several writers have argued that elementary schools need to teach self-enhancing social skills to prevent children from becoming bullies or victims (Dubow, Huesmann, & Eron, 1987; Lochman, 1992). Specifically, young children should be taught prosocial alternatives to aggressive behavior to prevent patterns of bullying (Bay-Hinitz, Peterson, & Quilitch, 1994), as well as assertiveness skills to teach children to avoid becoming victims (Besag, 1989; Hoover & Hazler, 1991; Olweus, 1994). In addition, we recommend that all students be taught anger management skills and conflict resolution skills because so many boys are not encouraged to learn these social skills. Early school-based primary prevention programs providing such training make sense because behavior is malleable early in life (Eron, 1994; Huesmann & Miller, 1994; Kellam, Rebok, Ialongo, & Mayer, 1994) and because schools are considered to be important socialization agents of children (Huesmann & Miller, 1994). Because space limitations preclude a discussion of the in-depth process of teaching these social skills to children, the reader is referred to the writings of Besag (1989), Olweus (1991, 1993, 1994), and Remboldt (1994a, 1994b) for comprehensive treatment of this subject.

We emphasize again that the school adults should be the driving force behind these early changes in male socialization; the children cannot be expected to bear this responsibility. This is especially true for the bullies. They should not be viewed as aberrant boys but as boys who are acting in ways that are a logical extension of normative male socialization (Brooks & Silverstein, 1995).

The Assessment Component

Although primary prevention programs can forestall bullying among some children, other children may have already become bullies before the prevention component is implemented. Therefore, a schoolwide assessment of bullying is required to ascertain the current extent of the problem and to identify perpetrators and victims who require counseling (Roberts & Coursol, 1996). Questionnaires used for such assessments should include a clear definition of bullying, with many examples of bullying behavior that very young children can understand. Different questionnaires may have to be developed for the different grades to make sure everyone understands the questions. Kindergartners and first graders may have to be personally interviewed if they cannot read well. Informal discussions with teachers can be very helpful in determining children who might be victims or bullies.

In addition to generating data regarding the current bullying climate, the assessment process can have the added benefit of casting formerly tolerated behaviors in a new light for the children as well as the adults. Furthermore, the assessment can reinforce any earlier efforts to educate the school community about the school's commitment to eliminating bullying.

The Supportive Counseling and Training Component

Because bullies and their victims are at risk of suffering a variety of long-term adjustment difficulties, both populations would benefit from supportive counseling and training designed to teach them adaptive skills for coping with their respective difficulties. Oliver et al. (1994) argued that family counseling involving the parents of the victims and the bullies will enhance individual counseling with these populations. Pertinent discussions of this work have been provided by Henggler (1989), Horne and Sayger (1990), Hoover and Hazler (1991), McCord and Tremblay (1992), Oliver et al. (1994), Roberts and Coursol (1996), and Stumphauzer (1986). Included in any counseling and training should be frank discussions with boys on male socialization and the constant pressure to conform to gender norms.

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH FINDINGS

Data from several studies evaluating the clinical efficacy of schoolwide intervention programs, consisting of many of the components described above, indicated a reduction in bullying over time after whole-school intervention plans are implemented. In a study conducted by Olweus (1994), 2,500 students in Grades 4 through 7 participating in schoolwide programs were followed over 2.5 years. The results indicated that bully/victim incidents were reduced by 50% after 2 years. In a similar study targeting an entire secondary school located in the United Kingdom, bully/victim problems were reduced by 20% (Arora, 1994). Finally, in another study completed by Sharp and Smith (1991; as cited in Arora, 1994), 16 primary schools participating in a whole-school campaign reported a decrease in the frequency of bullying behaviors.

An important discovery reported by both Olweus (1993) and Arora (1994) is that their schoolwide interventions required at least 2 years of implementation before significant positive gains were observed. During the 1st year of implementation, policies and procedures were developed and vital education and skills-training activities were started, but only modest benefits were noted. During the 2nd year of the programs, however, the interventions seemed to have favorable ripple effects throughout the schools, such that substantial reductions in bullying behaviors were achieved by the end of the year. That a long-term intervention is necessary to effect positive, systemic change is reasonable, considering the profound philosophical changes the schools are making.

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Because schoolwide interventions seem to be effective in reducing bullying behavior, we urge school counselors to become effective catalysts and advocates for systemic change by being active and visible throughout every step of the development and implementation of a schoolwide program. Furthermore, the school counselor has the opportunity to effect some very positive changes by challenging normative beliefs about gender stereotypes.

After completing the gender role workshop (O'Neil & Carroll, 1988), school counselors must continually reflect on their own socialization and know what gender assumptions they have unconsciously made in the past. Counselors will have to be aware of the restrictive limitations placed on boys that are caused by stereotypes and be willing to challenge accepted male patterns of aggression. Other key aspects of the counselor role are highlighted below. For additional information, we recommend that school counselors consult the writings of Besag (1989), Olweus (1993, 1994), Remboldt (1994a, 1994b), and Smith and Sharp (1994) pertaining to bully intervention programs, as well as Baker and Shaw's (1987) extensive review regarding the development and implementation of primary prevention programs. Valuable suggestions for creating a gender-equal school environment can be found in Askew and Ross (1988).

The gender role journey workshop (O'Neil & Carroll, 1988) is designed to help men and women be aware of everyday gender role conflict and understand the pain and limitations of patriarchal sexism. Nevertheless, during the initial stages of their involvement in bullying programs, school counselors must still be prepared for challenges from other adult employees in the school. Some school personnel might be resistant to change simply because tolerance for bullying is deeply ingrained. In other cases, school adults may oppose change because they are bullies themselves who react defensively when the subject of maltreatment is brought up. Other adults may fear confronting the issue of bullying because they have been the victims of bullying behavior by coworkers or significant others in their lives.

These difficult circumstances call for a number of sensitive and assertive responses by the school counselor. Neese (1989) recommended that school counselors conduct in-service training designed to help all school personnel to examine whether they have been the perpetrators of psychological maltreatment. We caution school counselors to accept this role only if they have clear support from their administrators. We also warn counselors to avoid forming dual relationships with either adult perpetrators or victims of maltreatment by referring them to a professional from an outside agency for counseling. In addition, we urge school counselors to adopt a win-win attitude while lobbying for a schoolwide program. Furthermore, we recommend that school counselors use Baker's (1996) many suggestions for building a power base for counseling programs and for coping with the stress associated with promoting social reforms within school environments.

Because school counselors have both assessment and program implementation skills by virtue of their training, it is recommended that school counselors conduct the initial and ongoing assessments of bullying and assist in the delivery of pertinent interventions. Throughout the implementation phase, the school counselor can help all of the adults to stay focused on the goal, work with the teachers to incorporate aspects of the program into the curriculum, introduce new school adults and children into the program, encourage the children to report bullying incidents, regularly publish results of the effort, and help the adults to see the extreme importance of the consistent application of rules and sanctions. Ideally, the school counselor should lead the way by challenging normative beliefs about male aggression, train the class-

.oom teachers to stop trouble before it starts, and intervene in any situation—the classroom, hallways, bathrooms, the school yard, bus, sports field, and the cafeteria—where bullying might occur. Also, school counselors may want to focus special attention on children in the first and third grades and in the first year of middle school, because these grades seem to be critical periods for the development of aggressive behavior (see Kellam et al., 1994). Finally, after transgressions occur, school counselors may need to work collaboratively with family counselors from outside agencies to deliver counseling for bullies, victims, and their families. Any disciplinary action must be matter of fact and shame-free.

SUMMARY

The United States is a patriarchal society that demands that boys conform to a soul-crushing and outdated masculine ideal. Schools, as agents of cultural transmission, teach boys what is accepted behavior through their systems of management, disciplinary policies, and institutional values. The elements that make up the ethos of a school can create and perpetuate the aggression it seeks to control (Askew & Ross, 1988). So, within the school cultures that reflect the values of the larger patriarchal society, school personnel have come to condone an astonishing array of antisocial behaviors, as long as they fall short of murder.

It is time to reevaluate the values of this patriarchal culture and let boys get off the treadmill of constant competition and emotional repression. It is time to create safe, positive, gender-equal school environments that are essential for healthy maturation and education. It is time for school personnel and parents to work toward a school climate that clearly forbids bullying and to address the underlying biases and prejudices that encourage bullying. It is time for the schools to build humanitarian school cultures based on gender equality, compassion, collaboration, and interdependence, so that every child is free to be his or her own authentic self, regardless of gender.

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Chapter 13

PEERVENTION: A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO PREVENTING VIOLENCE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Andrew K. Tobias

STUDENTS WITH BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS CONCERN PARENTS, teachers, administrators, and other school personnel. These students have difficulty staying on task in class, and they are often viewed as disruptive and uncooperative. Their actions often alarm others and detract from a positive learning environment.

Wanda, for example, is a third-grade student who hated school. When she attended school, which was irregularly, she was unpredictable. She frequently made inappropriate comments to teachers and classmates, provoking name-calling and sometimes fights. Her teachers said that she would not follow directions, made spiteful remarks, and interrupted class presentations through her side comments. Oftentimes she left her seat and wandered around the classroom, disturbing others. She seldom completed her assignments or homework. One day, she said to her counselor, "I hate school. I hate teachers. And this place stinks."

In another example, Bill, a fifth-grade student, is known for his quick temper. He usually lashed out with his "put downs" and insulting language when others tried to direct him. "You fool," he shouted at a teacher one day, "Who do you think you are talking to? . . . I ain't no dummy." Defensive, antagonistic, and irritable, Bill believed that everyone was against him. He choked back tears while talking to his counselor as he related how no one liked him and that teachers did not care about him.

Wanda and Bill need help. They do not like school and have trouble adjusting to rules and classroom procedures. They have learned to be aggressive, and they believe that hostile actions keep others from discovering their feelings of insecurity and powerlessness. What can be done to assist them?

VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

School violence is the tangible expression of unresolved conflicts (Kadel & Follman, 1993). Acts of violence and antisocial behavior disrupt the normal functioning of the schools, and the fear of violence can prevent teachers and students from concentrating on meaningful learning and teaching. Each school day in the United States, 160,000 students skip classes because of fear of physical harm (Kadel & Follman, 1993). Every day there are 100,000 assaults on teachers and 100,000 thefts reported in schools. Innumerable dollars are spent to secure the safety of staff and students (Molnar, 1992). Money that should be used for instructional material, staff development, and other educational needs may be spent instead on security measures.

From reading, writing, and arithmetic to rage, risk, and retaliation, teachers today face many new challenges in classrooms throughout the United States, where they must often rely on security personnel to keep the peace (Henry, 1993). To teach children today, teachers need personal qualities and skills to help regain the respect and control once taken for granted when society held teachers in high esteem. Throughout U.S. schools and classrooms, school staff, students, and parents must deal with violent behavior daily (Molnar, 1992).

Whatever the source of the problem, school violence is one of the most perplexing issues facing educators. Teachers are frustrated and unsure of what to do. Most teachers, school counselors, and administrators have participated in in-service programs and workshops to better learn how to manage violent students. However, student-to-staff ratios make it difficult to implement new approaches.

A relatively new approach is the use of peer facilitators as a positive influence. Peer facilitators are students who are trained by a certified guidance counselor or teacher to use helping skills and concepts to assist other students—and sometimes adults—to think about ideas and feelings, to explore alternatives to situations, and to make responsible decisions (Myrick, 1993).

Peer facilitation can serve as a structure around which caring professionals can plan positive interactions among students, including those with violent behaviors. Peer culture influences academic achievement and social development just as it does other areas of student life. According to Myrick (1993), peer approval is particularly important for children in middle school. Students who have been assisted by peer facilitators outperform students who have not received such assistance. They obtain a better understanding and will develop a more positive attitude toward the task at hand.

STATISTICS ON SCHOOL VIOLENCE

School violence is a major concern for administrators, counselors, teachers, parents, and the community. This creates problems for students and teachers, and certainly detracts from a conducive learning environment. Many teachers are afraid for their lives as they enter the classroom. Most of the violent acts are students against students. However, in recent years, violent acts against teachers, counselors, and administrators have increased.

Violence is a growing epidemic and a threat to students and educators. An *Education Week* survey of 720 school districts in the Unites States found that 82% of those surveyed reported an increase in school violence since 1989 (U.S. Department of Education, 1990). Seventy-eight percent reported student-on-student violence as the most common. The National School Board Association reported that not only urban schools but rural schools as well fall victim to violence (Portner, 1994).

A reported 3 million violent acts, one occurring every 6 seconds, take place in school buildings or on school property every year (Harris, Louis & Associates, 1994). Each day, 100,000 children carry guns to school. Teens between the ages of 12 and 15 are less likely to report the crimes committed against them (American Psychological Association, 1993). From 1985 to 1988, 1.2 million crimes in schools went unreported ("Keeping Every Child Safe," 1993).

Violence in the schools has devastating effects on the students who are victims to or who witness these acts. Academic performance, school attendance, self-worth, and psychological well-being are all affected by school violence.

If school personnel do not want to limit their role to bandaging the victims of school violence, they will need to become much more effective advocates for the students and their families (Molnar, 1992). By starting early, with the elementary students, the schools may have a chance to divert the flow of intolerance and rage. Peer facilitation training can teach elementary school students the art of positive social interaction before they become hopelessly mired in antisocial habits. Schools are able to identify potentially violent students as early as first grade. Two risk factors in young children are (a) living in economically and disadvantaged neighborhoods and (b) exhibiting chronic behavior problems and establishing a pattern of antisocial behavior upon entering school (Kadel & Follman, 1993).

PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH SCHOOL VIOLENCE

A Student's Perspective

Individual growth and development in students is a continuous process. The elementary school student goes through a time of rampant social, physical, intellectual, and behavioral changes (Gaustad, 1991). Hranitz and Eddowes (1990) described this as a period of necessary change from the organization of childhood through the disorganization of preadolescence. Violent behaviors occur when students have difficulty adjusting to developmental tasks. When elementary school students have difficulty building wholesome attitudes and getting along with peers, problem behaviors are more likely to occur. These problems are also more likely to arise when elementary school students fail to develop basic reading and writing skills, concepts essential for daily living, a value system, and positive attitudes toward others.

Academic Performance

Academically, students who attend a violent school suffer from a lack of motivation and unsatisfactory grades (Hranitz & Eddowes, 1990). Those who are in constant fear of danger often use up their energies on surviving rather than studying (Wallach, 1991). Adolescent students have been reported to enter precociously into adulthood, and school-age children are reported to be extremely withdrawn or belligerent in behavior as well as have more difficulty in school performance. Children who had not yet entered school who have witnessed violent acts were found to be submissive and regressive in nature (Wallach, 1991).

Research also suggests that poor grades often lead to antisocial and delinquent behavior (Fowler, 1992). Fowler investigated the educational experiences of 106 adolescents who appeared in juvenile court. The majority of the students displayed problem behaviors in school and failing grades. Findings indicated that those students who had poor grades also had the worse antisocial and delinquent behaviors (Fowler, 1992).

School Attendance

School attendance is also negatively affected by violence. Approximately 160,000 students in the United States are absent daily from school because they fear bodily harm (Lane & McWhirter, 1992). Today many students perceive school as a scary and unhappy place. A 1990 survey reported that 44.3% of students did not feel safe at school (Menacker, Weldon, & Hurwitz, 1990). Almost 8% of junior and senior high students attending an urban school did not attend school at least 1 day a month because of fear of violence (Hranitz & Eddowes, 1990).

According to Tobias (1992), school attendance is a factor in students' attitudes and behavior in school . Students who consistently attend school have more positive attitudes and better grades. A significant number of studies completed in the last 5 years have identified school attendance as the critical issue facing dropouts.

Self-Worth

An individual has certain beliefs about his or her competencies. This belief plays a crucial role in how the individual achieves in life. According to Purkey (1991), the self can best be described as a "complex and dynamic system of beliefs which an individual holds true about himself [or herself], each belief with a corresponding value" (p. 7). Students with poor self-images rarely perform satisfactorily in school (Nenortas, 1987). They are also unable to set long-term goals (Hranitz & Eddowes, 1990). Those chronically exposed to violence fear having a future. It is difficult for them to focus on the tasks at hand, such as learning (Wallach, 1991).

In terms of forces that mold and shape the self-concept, particularly during troubled adolescence, perceptions of self-adequacy and self-worth are largely determined by peer status and peer interaction (Purkey, 1991). This influence is second only to that of the family (Tobias, 1992).

Emotional Problems

Emotional disturbances may also be a consequence of being exposed to violence in the school. Students suffering from trauma as a result of exposure to violence often have problems with general cognitive functioning and distorted memories and sense of time (Wallach, 1991). Kniveton's (1986) study found that students who are subjected to violence are more likely to model it. Children exposed to violence have also been found to suffer the same symptoms as those children living in countries where war is prevalent. Some of the symptoms include interrupted sleep, impediment of normal development, and posttraumatic stress disorder ("Keeping Every Child Safe," 1993). Children age 11 and under are three times more likely to suffer from posttraumatic stress disorder than those age 12 and over.

USE OF PEERVENTION

Unfortunately, Americans live in a violent society, in which physical force is often used to hurt others. Most adolescents have been exposed to violence through television, movies, neighborhoods, and even in their homes. According to Myrick and Folk (1991), violence is embedded into the foundation of American society to such an extent that there are victims in every community.

Many school administrators prefer to use paddling or corporal punishment when students violate school rules, although this method of discipline is vanishing in many school systems. In most cases, the effects are not long-lasting.

Because students have for many years witnessed the use of physical punishment as a way to change the behaviors and attitude of others, they are confused about the use of violence against others. Eight out of 10 criminals were hit and abused when they were children. They learned that only the toughest survive; if they are mean, they know others will not harm them (Myrick & Folk, 1991).

Myrick and Folk (1991) reported several benefits of *peervention* for students and schools. Researchers have found that students who were trained in peervention exhibited more cooperative behavior and listened to others more. The use of peervention has reduced the number of discipline events in some schools (Myrick & Folk, 1991).

Peervention has been found to enable students to resolve their own conflicts (Newton, 1993). Programs that implement conflict resolution strategies through peervention can contribute to settling contentions peacefully and possibly prevent them (Wallach, 1991). Through this type of intervention, students can learn appropriate skills to resolving conflicts. Studies have found that students exposed to peervention behaved more cooperatively and were more attentive (Lane & McWhirter, 1992).

There are many kinds of peervention programs. Myrick and Sorensen (1978) were instrumental in developing peervention programs in the middle schools. They used peers as special friends and small-group leaders. As special friends, peer facilitators were paired with disruptive students, students in need of a friend, low-motivated students, and others. Peers were trained to ask questions and then clarify the answers that correspond to a feeling. They were also taught to give simple acknowledgments and look for opportunities to link ideas and feelings. Aside from small-group discussion that included guidance topics, peer facilitators were also used to assist students study for various academic topics. In addition, peer facilitators were instructed to help lead problem-solving groups, learning centers, study circles, and demonstration groups. This made it possible to have more working groups in a classroom and, thus, more student involvement and participation (Myrick, 1993; Myrick & Sorensen, 1992).

Utilizing peer facilitators in schools was noted by Vriend (1969), who wrote,

> The helper principle has great potential for schools since helpers from the same age level and backgrounds can often find the right idiom, the right example, and generally serve as the communicator between adult and child . . . and [an] older child can communicate more effectively with a younger one than adults; he [or she] is not regarded as an authority figure; there is an opportunity for reciprocal influence; and an older child provides a more realistic level of aspiration for the younger child than an adult. (p. 51)

Research of secondary school peervention programs has been reported by many researchers. Tolone (1990) researched results on drugs and delinquency. Dubois, Felner, Brand, Adan, and Evans (1992) studied the relationship patterns of Black and White peer facilitators. Thompson (1990) researched results on self-concept; Bourgeois (1990) and Burke (1989) investigated the effects of peer facilitators on the promotion of health of secondary students; Miller (1988) researched peer encouragement and science and mathematics; and Seligman (1990) studied giftedness.

A report by Cohen (1982) examined peer-facilitator effectiveness. This report focused on the educational outcomes of peer facilitation. Findings were conclusive in showing that students helped by peer facilitators outperformed control students on exams and developed increasingly positive attitudes toward the subject matter covered.

In addition, findings highlighted the gains of the peer facilitators in understanding the subject matter covered and in gaining positive attitudes toward the subject area. Structured sessions proved significantly more beneficial than nonstructured sessions. Myrick (1993), Myrick and Folk (1991), and Myrick and Sorensen (1992) emphasized the effectiveness of using this student resource to help other students become more successful in the school setting. While historically peervention was confined to academic tutoring as a solution to the persistent problem of resource scarcity, today's peer facilitator can be seen aiding and assisting peers with a plethora of concerns. The elementary school student in transition particularly needs assistance in behavior management. The advantages inherent in peer facilitation have relevance to the need to assist elementary school students in developing appropriate school behavior.

HOW CAN PEERS HELP?

Peer facilitators sometimes work with students who have been the victim of violent acts. What should peers do? In addition to talking to their peer coordinator or school counselor, peer facilitators can use some of the following general guidelines to help them respond to these students:

1. Believe the story the students have shared. Even if the student made the story up, they are still in need of assistance.
2. Tell the student that you feel bad that the incident happened, but you are glad that they shared it with you.
3. Focus on your own feelings, so that you can remain nonjudgmental and not say something that might embarrass or offend the student. Stay cool.
4. Encourage the student to share his or her problem with the school counselor, an administrator, teacher, or some other responsible adult in the school. Also, as the peer facilitator, you should volunteer to go with the student if the student wants you there.
5. Make no promises that you cannot keep, and do not promise to keep it a secret.
6. Avoid giving advice. Spend the majority of your time listening.

In addition to these general guidelines, peer facilitators can also provide assistance through small-group interaction. The following peervention example can assist peers in working with students who have committed violent acts or students who have been victims of violent acts.

DEVELOPING A PEERVENTION PROGRAM

Peer Facilitator Training

A peer facilitator is a student who is trained by a certified school counselor or teacher to use helping skills and concepts to assist other students, and sometimes adults, to think about ideas and feelings, to explore alternatives to situations, and to make responsible decisions. Peers should be trained on the following key components: (a) the six facilitative responses listed above, (b) how to lead a small group, and (c) the problem-solving model. Because of space limitation, the reader is encouraged to review these components in Myrick's (1993) book, *Developmental Guidance and Counseling: A Practical Approach* (pp. 243–263).

Prior to implementing the peer-facilitator guidance unit, elementary school counselors should review leading group activities and individual activities with their peer facilitators. The sessions should last approximately 45 minutes. The training session should be held in a relatively private area with flexible seating.

SELECTING PEER FACILITATORS

From a population of elementary school students (usually third, fourth, or fifth graders), counselors would identify 10 to 12 students to be trained as peer facilitators. Two students should be used as alternates. In addition to gender equity, students should be chosen using the following criteria:

1. Availability: students who can participate in the training program and the intervention.
2. Verbal ability: students who can express ideas well and in an organized manner.
3. Intellectual ability: students who can grasp ideas quickly and be trained in a relatively short period of time.
4. Leadership potential: students who have the respect of other students and who others listen to willingly.
5. Motivation: students who are enthusiastic about becoming peer facilitators.
6. Responsibility: students who can initiate and complete projects with minimal supervision.

Counselors can use a table of random numbers to assign peer facilitators to work with students with violent behaviors.

Selection of Students With Violent Behaviors

Students should be selected for peer intervention if they exhibit at least one of the following behaviors:

- fighting/attacking
- abusive language
- defiance, failure to observe school rules, failure to follow directions of staff
- skipping classes
- excessive tardiness
- bus misconduct
- classroom disruption

The Peer Facilitator Intervention

The peer-facilitator intervention should involve elementary students leading a five-session small-group guidance unit with students who have been victims or perpetrators of violent acts. The unit should consist of 45-minute sessions using activities and strategies designed to improve students' attitudes, grades, behaviors, self-esteem, and school attendance. Peer facilitators will also use material as outlined in Myrick and Bowman's (1981) book, *Children Helping Children* (pp. 116–134), and Myrick and Sorenson's (1978) book, *Peer Helping: A Practical Guide* (pp. 45–63). The materials required for each session include paper, pencil markers, and posters.

Session 1 The students will sit in a small semicircle and take part in a go-around initiated by peer facilitators. Group members introduce themselves and share one thing about themselves that they would like to improve. Peer facilitators then ask the following questions:

1. What is one change you would make in order to make school better for you?
2. What is one change that you would make to make school better for others?
3. What is the best feeling that you have had at school? The worst?

Session 2 The students again will sit in a semicircle, and peer facilitators will begin the group discussion by asking the following questions:

1. What makes a good student?
2. What are some obstacles that get in the way of getting better grades at school?
3. What do you consider to be the biggest problems facing students in our school?

On a piece of paper given to the students by peer facilitators, students rank the top 10 problems in order of priority, with the most pressing problem listed as Number 1. After the discussion, student share a time in school when they feel successful.

Session 3 In a group go-around, students discuss two cases:

1. What is a problem that you are having or a problem that a student in this school is having?
2. If you wanted teachers and students to view you more positively, what would you need to do?

Session 4 Students sit in a circle and discuss their feelings about the following issues:

1. How can I improve my grades?
2. School attendance concerns
3. How I feel about myself
4. Teacher–student relationships
5. Student–student relationships

Session 5 Seated in a semicircle, students choose problems that they have had trouble solving. Peer facilitators lead students through the problem-solving model.

1. What is the problem or situation?
2. What have you tried?
3. What else could you do?
4. What is your next step?

In this small-group guidance unit, peer facilitators can use the problem-solving model and other facilitative skills to encourage students to think about themselves and their behavior in school. These sessions can be informal, allowing students to focus on what they would like to do in and out of school. These sessions are designed to be supportive and to enable the students to follow up with issues, concerns, and needs that emerge during the small-group guidance unit.

Peer facilitators can also assist in the implementation of school-based violence prevention programs. They can help teachers and counselors as they present programs throughout the school. They can assist with setting up equipment, role playing, or talking with students. Because of their training in attending and listening skills, peer facilitators can help teachers better communicate with students who are violent.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PEER FACILITATORS

When peer-facilitator programs have been implemented in schools, careful attention has been given to the selection of students (Myrick, 1993). The most common criterion has been leadership ability. A second criterion for selecting facilitators has been motivation. After peer facilitators have been trained, they can use their helping skills and concepts to assist a variety of students in school. Elementary school facilitator programs have implemented projects in which student helpers assisted student volunteers, classrooms, and adults in school. In addition, peer facilitators have worked with students who have had special needs. For example, Gumaer's (1976) facilitators led small-group discussions in a classroom on the topic of racial conflict. Weise (1976, cited in Tobias, 1992) reported using fourth-grade facilitators to lead a second-grade class through a developmental guidance session.

In several programs, facilitators have assisted other students who had special needs or problems that might be helped by the involvement with peers. For example, the program described by Hoffman (1976) used student helpers to give cooperative attention to one boy who was having particular difficulty with "personal adjustment." In another case, Edwards (1976) reported that primary-grade students with special needs were helped when they worked with student facilitators. Once the student helpers completed a training program, they were matched with younger students who needed assistance in handwriting, fine muscle coordination, reading skills, math concepts, verbal expressions, attending behavior, or playing behavior (Tobias, 1992).

Peer facilitators have been successful in helping other children with several kinds of special needs. However, one need in particular has been of special concern to professional educators and mental health specialists. Though there has been much development and research, it is well documented that a major concern still exists for students with behavioral problems.

The pervasive nature of the peer culture significantly shapes the external behavior of its members, particularly in situations in which what is "right" is unclear or ambiguous. The unstable preadolescent exhibits impetuous behavior—acting first and later realizing the outcomes of that conduct. This characteristic shows up sharply among elementary school students because increased freedom presents more opportunities for making decisions and regulating behavior. Myrick (1993), Myrick and Folk (1991), Myrick and Sorenson (1992), and Tobias (1992) expounded on the untapped resource of peervention, which they maintained can be constructive and positive.

SUMMARY

Violence continues to be a very serious concern in U.S. schools. In-school suspensions and out-of-school suspensions are increasing, with 20.2% of students being suspended from public schools. In elementary schools, 7.5% of the students are suspended for violent behaviors. Elementary school students account for 6.5% out of 20% of total in-school suspensions (Tobias, 1992). Public schools throughout the nation are faced with the growing rate of violence. According to the U.S. Department of Education (1986), 96% of all public schools suspend students for problem behaviors: 35% for selling illegal drugs, 82% for theft, and 72% for violation of laws that were reported to police by school officials. Many schools (33%) have begun transferring students to special alternative schools (Tobias, 1992).

For the past 15 years, the professional literature has reported successful peer-facilitator programs (Myrick, 1993). Peer facilitators have helped many students and assisted counselors, teachers, and administrators in managing student problems. Peervention programs are becoming more appealing. Educators have realized that students are one of the schools' most valuable resources.

The power of peer culture and trained peer facilitators has the potential for making positive changes in the lives of students who have been victims or perpetrators of violent behavior. The effectiveness of peer facilitators helping students to change is well documented. An elementary school peer-facilitator intervention can make a positive difference with students exposed to violence. Through proper training and supervision, peer facilitators can assist elementary school students in improving their grades, school attendance, self-worth, and emotional stability. By using one of the school's most valuable resources—the students—peer facilitator programs can enhance learning and provide guidance opportunities to students and assist counselors and teachers.

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Section IV

SPECIAL NEEDS/CONCERNS

Chapter 14

COUNSELING THE SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENT

Jackie M. Allen

IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM, DEMANDS FOR programs and services for special needs students necessitate the development of new methods and practices. Accountability and collaboration are contemporary emphases in education. All students are being held accountable for academic progress reported on quarterly or semester report cards, including progress in special education goals, and measured by standardized tests with outcome data by schools and reported in local newspapers. Legislators and parents expect students to make academic progress despite social, emotional, behavioral, cognitive, or physical barriers. In this chapter, ***special needs students*** refers to all students who have specific characteristics that require special attention in the school system. These students may include, but not be limited to, students who are slow learners, unmotivated, linguistically different, culturally diverse, as well as those with physical handicaps and medical problems, those who are learning disabled, and those who have other disabilities. When students with special needs are required to meet escalating academic benchmarks, educators are doubly challenged to meet the basics for all students and the extra needs of special students.

In the microcosm of the regular classroom, the teacher cannot meet all the special needs of each student. The African saying, "It takes a whole village to raise a child," is very pertinent to the special needs student in the public education system. Barriers to learning take many forms, including a physical handicap, an emotional problem, hyperactivity, homelessness, a dysfunctional family, a learning disability, a mental illness, language deficits, victimization, and drug abuse. Cloud (1999) reminded us of the progress in equity for students with disabilities:

> Elementary schools are creatively integrating general and special education programs; parents are being given a legitimate voice in policy decision-making; and more disabled children are in regular schools than ever before. Yet there are still many obstacles to overcome before a truly equitable system is achieved. (p. 9)

Have school children in the United States been abandoned to an imperfect system that educates the masses but ignores or neglects the development of the individual student? The special student can only be adequately and equitably educated through collaborative efforts in which school counselors take leadership roles.

Collaboration is absolutely necessary to bridge the gap between mediocre education and adequate or exceptional education for the special needs student. Transdisciplinary teams composed of counselors, educators, and families are more effective in targeting the whole student within the context of the school, home, and community environment (Carpenter, King-Sears, & Keys, 1998). As partners in the education of their children, parents must also actively support educators in their efforts to provide adequate education for special needs students. School-based counselors can provide the linkages needed to connect parents with programs and services within the school and to additional services in the community.

Elementary school counselors must be aware of special education legislation and other legislation such as Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the role of the school counselor with special needs students; and the American School Counselor Association's position statement on working with special needs students, adapting and implementing programmatic emphases, including the ASCA standards to meet the needs of special students, and working with school staff, parents, and community members. This chapter attempts to be both informative and thought provoking in its coverage of counseling the special needs student.

IDEA LEGISLATION

The basis for the philosophy, programs, and services for special education services is found in legislation. The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1975, known as Public Law 94-142, sets the basic rules and regulations for special education students. With the reauthorization of IDEA in 1997, it became apparent that the primary goals of the new amendments were to increase parent involvement and to increase student participation in the general education curriculum. In addition, IDEA 1997 included a presumption that children with disabilities would be educated in the regular classroom. The new amendments specified at least eight new areas that were to be included in Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and focused on new regulations in student discipline, suspension, and expulsion. IDEA legislation mandated a free and public education for all individuals from ages 0 to 21 years and provided access to a wide range of related services, including counseling. With movements toward full inclusion of all students in the regular classroom, elementary school counselors will need to design programs to meet the needs of special students and to provide more services to these students and their parents.

An analysis of 1997 IDEA reauthorization legislation included required considerations for IEPs in the following areas:

1. Listing of students' strengths
2. An opportunity for recording parents' concerns for improving their child's education

3. If the student's behavior impeded learning, the inclusion of positive behavioral interventions
4. Addressing the language needs of limited English-proficient students
5. If appropriate, the provision of Braille instruction for a blind or visually impaired child
6. Addressing the child's communication needs
7. If appropriate, including a child's needs for assistive technology devices and services

Interacting with students outside the classroom, counselors may provide valuable information to the IEP team about students' strengths and special needs and also assist parents in expressing their concerns for improving their child's education.

Membership of the IEP team was also enlarged to add one general education teacher, one special education teacher, an individual who can interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation results, and other members as appropriate who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the student. Les Atchison, executive director of the Capitol Sierra School Leadership Center, believes that collaborative leadership "across the board" is vital in the facilitation and implementation of IDEA 1997 (Loomis, Atchinson, & Atchinson, 2000). School counselors are increasingly being invited to be members of IEP teams as those having special expertise regarding the student. This role provides the school counselor with an excellent opportunity to advocate for students with special needs.

Other changes in required IEP statements emphasized an explanation of the child's present level of educational performance and how the child's disability affects progress in the general education curriculum; measurable annual goals, including benchmarks and short-term objectives facilitating student progress in the general curriculum; and a method for notifying parents of student progress toward annual goals. Special education services and supplementary aids that would be provided and program modifications or supports for school personnel were to be listed on the IEP. The reasons and degree to which the child will participate with disabled children and any modifications in the administration of statewide or districtwide assessments of student achievement were included on the IEP. Additional statements clarifying transition service needs and interagency responsibilities, starting at age 14, were also included. Again the role of the elementary school counselor is to be informed of the new regulations, assist in the facilitation of the special education IEP process, provide counseling as appropriate, and advocate for the student and the student's parents.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION ACT, SECTION 504

Additional federal legislation known as Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination against individuals with a disability in any program receiving federal financial assistance. Furthermore, it defines the conditions for which an individual with a disability would be included under this section of the law. Such conditions are as follows:

1. A mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, which include, but are not limited to, caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.
2. A record of such impairment as described above.
3. The individual is regarded as having such an impairment as previously described.

It is the responsibility under Section 504 of each school district to identify, evaluate, and, if the student is determined to be eligible, provide access to appropriate educational services.

Elementary school counselors can be involved in many ways in the effective modification of student academic programs and school activities. The following are some modifications in which counselors can facilitate accommodations under Section 504 provisions:

1. Working with the teacher to develop special lesson plans and programs
2. Modifying class schedules
3. Arranging for preferential seating
4. Providing for modification of test formats
5. Securing specialized equipment
6. Changing daily schedules to allow for rest time, longer passing time, or shortened days
7. Developing special behavior plans
8. Making sure parents have special parking for delivery and picking up of their students
9. Participating in the writing of the 504 plan as a student advocate
10. Providing specialized counseling services

IDEA VERSUS SECTION 504

A brief comparison of both significant pieces of legislation for special needs students is important knowledge for elementary school counselors. The basic purpose of the IDEA legislation is to provide federal financial assistance to state and local education agencies to assist in the education of children with disabilities. Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was designed to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability in all federally funded programs and activities. All individuals who are disabled under IDEA legislation are also considered to be disabled and protected under Section 504. However, individuals disabled under Section 504 may not be disabled under IDEA. A student with diabetes, for example, whose medical condition does not have an adverse effect on the student's educational performance, would be considered disabled under Section 504 but not under IDEA.

An IEP is not required under Section 504, but a plan is required, and it is recommended that the district document a meeting of persons knowledgeable about the student and specify the agreed-upon plan. Section 504 requires reevaluation before a significant change in placement, whereas IDEA requires informed consent before an initial evaluation is conducted and mandatory reevaluation at least every 3 years. Due process provisions of IDEA include detailed hearing rights and requirements. Section 504 has a review procedure that requires notice, as well as the right to inspect records and to participate in a hearing and be represented by counsel. Funding is provided for the identification process and programs of IDEA; there are no additional funds provided for the Section 504 process because that is considered part of general education. Enforcement of IDEA is by the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs and monitored by state departments of education. Section 504 is enforced by the U.S. Office for Civil Rights (Washington State Department of Education, 1993).

THE AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION POSITION STATEMENT

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA, 1999–2000), in determining the role of the school counselor and the special needs student, has taken the following position:

> ASCA believes that it is not the responsibility of the school counselor to be the only source of information or administrative representative in a district in preparing Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for students other than those portions relating to guidance and counseling. Further, school counselors should not make decisions regarding placement or retention or serve in any supervisory capacity in relation to the implementation of the IDEA, nor should they serve as a member of a multidisciplinary team reviewing placement referrals for those students not usually part of the counselor's caseload. In addition, the school counselor should not be responsible for the coordination of the 504 planning team or supervision of the implementation of the 504 plan. (p. 63)

The ASCA Position Statement on the professional school counselor and the special needs student spells out 10 distinct roles for the school counselor:

1. Multidisciplinary team member
2. Collaborator with other pupil personnel specialists
3. Instructor of social skills training
4. Coordinator of group guidance activities to improve self-esteem
5. Counselor—individual, group, and family
6. Advocate for students in both school and community
7. Observer and facilitator of behavior modification plans
8. Coordinator of career planning and transition
9. Facilitator—in the understanding of special needs students
10. Referral agent to other specialists in the school system and community

According to Allen and LaTorre (1998), "The school counselor as a service provider for special needs students is both an integral part of a comprehensive counseling and guidance program and an important member of an integrated services team" (p. 117). The goal of all school programs (pre-K through postsecondary) is the facilitation of student development and student learning. Primary roles of the school counselor are team member, counseling services provider, coordinator of community linkages and resources, consultant to school staff and parents, in-service instructor, and transition coordinator. The school counselor provides the same functions for special needs students in their caseloads as for general students. The major program areas in which the school counselor has a role and specific functions are the integrated services team, the comprehensive guidance and counseling program, the school system, and the community. Under each program area, the school counselor plays one or more roles and each role has many functions as listed in Table 14.1

The ASCA Position Statement on the special needs student further elaborates the role of the school counselor in relation to the ASCA standards for students and the relationship to the whole child.

Table 14.1 School Counselor Role and Function Chart

Program Area	Role	Duties/Functions
Integrated services team	Member	Identification Consultation Observation Behavior plans Referral
Comprehensive counseling and guidance program	Coordinator	Standards
	Counselor	Counseling: individual, group, family, critical incidents
	Instructor	Guidance curriculum
	Evaluator	Program evaluation
School system	Staff member	Committee work
	In-service provider	Professional development workshops
	Advocate/consultant	Champion student rights
	Coordinator	Prevention programs
	Leader	Change agent
Community	Coordinator	Linkage to community agencies School-to-career program
	Collaborator	Community programs Referrals

> Professional school counselors encourage and support the academic, social/emotional, and career development of all students through counseling programs within the schools. They are committed to assisting all students to realize their full potential despite cognitive, emotional, medical, behavioral, physical or social disabilities. (American School Counselor Association, 1999–2000, p. 62)

THE ASCA NATIONAL STANDARDS

The ASCA national standards define the domains and subsequent goals and objectives in which students should achieve competencies through a comprehensive developmental counseling and guidance program. Standards domain areas are academic development, career development, and social–emotional development. The standards infused into all "counseling programs help ensure equal opportunity for all students to participate fully in the educational process" (Campbell & Dahir, 1997, p. 10).

Academic Development

Essential to the success of every student is the domain of academic development. "One primary role of the school counselor in the local school is to facilitate academic school success for each student" (Allen & LaTorre, 1998, p. 118). As listed on the School Counselor Role and Function Chart (see Table 14.1), the school counselor has functions that promote academic development in all program areas. As a member of the integrated services team, the elementary school counselor helps identify at-risk and special needs students, observes such students in classrooms, reports on the observations to the school-site student study team, makes referrals for other programs or services and possible assessment, consults on specific cases in which the student is already in counseling, and works with classroom teachers to develop appropriate academic goals, which may include behavior management plans. As part of a 504 team, a school counselor will help identity and plan for the modification of the academic program to meet the special student's needs. Working with teachers, school counselors suggest modifications in classroom work and homework, seating arrangements, pairing students for tutoring, cross-age teaching programs, and strategies for group work and improved classroom participation.

Part of the comprehensive counseling and guidance program is individual counseling for student success and group counseling for students, such as study skills classes and academic self-esteem groups. An important aspect of the academic development domain is to help parents understand the unique characteristics and challenges of their special needs child and to help them plan realistically for the future, which includes being aware of a variety of special resources for their child. Family counseling helps parents with the grief process involved in recognizing their child's special need and how to work effectively in the school system to obtain an equitable education for their child. A proactive guidance curriculum for all elementary students would emphasize study skills, academic self-esteem building, information about standardized tests, the relation of academic skills to success in school and work, how to be a successful student, and the value of education.

School-system functions of the elementary school counselor include participating in schoolwide committees that set and evaluate student benchmarks; initiating mentoring or tutoring programs; promoting specially funded programs to enhance academic achievement; monitoring student progress in academic standards; having leadership in meeting individual student needs in academic achievement; and conducting workshops on such topics as learning styles, multiple intelligences, and barriers to student learning. The school counselor is a link to community agencies that provide academic assistance to parents in specialized learning centers and provides referrals when appropriate. Special needs students should be included in all academic programs, with modifications as appropriate.

Career Development

For the elementary student, career awareness is the primary developmental task. With special needs students, physical or other disabling conditions may hinder the full exploration of career areas that parents or teachers perceive to be beyond the reach of the special needs student. "In each phase of career development the special needs student requires not only special encouragement but specialized information" (Allen & LaTorre, 1998, p. 119). The elementary school counselor plays a key role in opening up the potential of each and every special needs student by assisting teachers and parents to become aware of the large number of specialized training programs, adaptive aids, and technological devices that will help a special needs student uncover his or her talents and develop those abilities for self-support in the workforce. Career days, career speakers, assignments that involve career awareness, career bulletin boards, and specialized guidance lessons on nontraditional careers should include specialized information for special needs students. The school counselor is a leader in providing career awareness through the comprehensive counseling and guidance program and developing important community linkages to business and industry.

Social–Personal Development

Social and personal development of special needs students presents the largest challenge to educators and parents. As an integrated services team member, the school counselor makes sure that the social–personal needs of each special student are discussed and goals or plans are written to address those needs. The elementary school counselor may be the service provider for individual or group counseling or may refer long-term or more severe cases to psychologists or community mental health providers. Assisting in the development of behavior modification plans is another possible function. It is very important for the school counselor to know and understand the characteristics of common disorders of elementary children such as attention deficit disorder, know how to use the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (4th ed.; American Psychiatric Association, 1994) as a resource, understand diagnoses found in psychoeducational reports, and be aware of the appropriate scope of expertise and practice of a school counselor (Allen & LaTorre, 1998)

In a symposium sponsored by Pace University, the New York City Board of Education, and American Guidance Service, Dr. Stephen Elliott, coauthor of the Social Skills Rating System (an assessment of social behaviors in school-age children), stated: "Social skills don't make kids smarter. They make them more amenable to learning. . . . What they do seems to enable students to benefit from learning opportunities that are offered to them in their school environment" ("Experts Discuss Social Skills' Effect on Learning," 2000). Reducing barriers to learning is a primary responsibility of all educators, but especially of the school counselor, who strives to realize the social and personal development of each elementary school student. As coordinator of the comprehensive counseling and guidance program, the school counselor plans guidance curriculum to encompass the social–personal development of special needs students. Pertinent topics of guidance lessons may include the following: self-esteem enhancers, social skills training, conflict resolution, survival skills, problem-solving, drug and tobacco prevention programs, comprehensive health education, and building family relationships.

Elementary school counselors work with the entire school staff to understand the special needs student. Consulting with educators and parents, advocating for programs to meet special students' needs, providing professional development workshops for staff, teaching parenting classes, and coordinating a conflict resolution program are some of the ways a school counselor can provide valuable leadership in the school system.

The school counselor is a link to the community and many resources for the special needs student. Referrals to outside mental health providers and other agencies providing programs and services may help parents with meeting their child's needs for counseling and other specialized services.

SUMMARY

Each elementary school counselor needs to be aware of and understand the special education IDEA laws and programs and Section 504 regulations and be able to delineate between the application of these two important legislative initiatives. Working with integrated services teams, school counselors collaborate to meet special students' needs. School counselors initiate and coordinate comprehensive developmental counseling and guidance programs, provide counseling and guidance services, provide consultation to the school staff and parents, and facilitate and coordinate community linkages. The school counselor makes sure that the ASCA standards are included in the comprehensive counseling and guidance program and are implemented for all students. The elementary school counselor is a vital link in the identification, program planning, and services for meeting the academic, career, and social–emotional needs of special students.

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Chapter 15

COUNSELING CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Joyce Williams Bergin and James J. Bergin

THIS CHAPTER DEALS WITH THE UNEXPECTED problems that may arise during the counseling of elementary children identified as having learning disabilities because of the language dysfunctions attributed to this category of children. These language-based problems can impede the counseling process. The definitions of the components of language, explanations of specific language deficits typical of children with learning disabilities, difficulties that may be encountered by elementary school counselors, intervention strategies, and recommendations for further study are addressed.

LEARNING DISABILITIES

Children with learning disabilities make up slightly over 50% of all school-age children identified with disabilities, or roughly 2.8 million youngsters ages 5 through 21 years (U.S. Department of Education, 1998). Learning disabilities is both the largest and most steadily growing category of disabilities for children served through special education programs in the United States. The majority of these children (42%) receive special education services in mainstream classrooms (U.S. Department of Education, 1998). Despite the prevalence of these children in public school settings, there seems to be some reluctance to address their needs in terms of both social and emotional development. Often, the manifestations of the disabilities associated with the classification *learning disabilities* create unique problems for elementary school counselors. It is important for counselors to understand these disabilities and to seek strategies with which to assist and support these children.

By definition, persons with learning disabilities have

> a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which disorder many manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. (Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975)

This aspect of the definition of learning disabilities has been part of the federal definition since 1975, when it appeared in Public Law 94-142, Education for All Handicapped Children Act, and has remained through the 1997 reauthorization of the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act, PL 105-17. Persons with learning disabilities display a range of diverse characteristics, with no individual exhibiting all of the identified characteristics. However, in the majority of persons with learning disabilities, the underlying source of these problems is believed to lie in "understanding or in using language."

In elementary school-age children, the most common manifestations of these disabilities include poor fine and gross motor skills, difficulty learning to read and write, and, in some cases, difficulty learning basic mathematical facts (Catts & Kamhi, 1999; Spafford & Grosser, 1996). In addition, these children demonstrate poor concentration and attending skills, fidgeting, and impulsivity. Social skills deficits reveal themselves in the child's failure to take turns, conversational skills difficulties, and either aggressive or withdrawn behaviors during child-to-child or child-to-group interactions. Academic or social failures can lead to either withdrawal or acting-out behaviors capable of further disrupting of the school experience (Bender, 1998; Lerner, 2000).

COMPONENTS OF LANGUAGE

The underlying language dysfunctions that create the difficulties for children also create problems for the counselors who attempt to assist them. To understand these difficulties, one must comprehend the basic elements of language. Linguistics is the systematic study of language. It defines the functional components of language that must be understood in order to appreciate its form, content, and use. These components include *phonology*, *morphology*, *syntax*, *semantics*, and *pragmatics*. Understanding the functions of these components can help counselors and other professionals appreciate the difficulties that arise in language comprehension and usage by those who have learning disabilities.

Phonology allows the speaker to sequence speech sounds and shape syllables according to the underlying rules of his or her native language. It allows the listener to identify the unique sounds that blend to form meaningful discourse. For example, the communicator must be able to differentiate between the specific sounds that make up the words *cat* and *cake* to ascertain that one word refers to an animal and the other to a dessert. Morphology allows one to use the smallest grammatical units, or *morphemes*, to organize words appropriately so as to be understood in the native language. Persons who have difficulties with morphology may be unable to form correctly possessives, noun plurals, and past tenses of irregular verbs. These difficulties with morphology typically appear in written expression, particularly in spelling. Syntax concerns the rules of sentence structure specific to one's native language. It governs the manner in which words are arranged to impart meaning. Semantics governs meaning and allows the speaker/writer to express language so that it can be understood by others in his or her society or culture. A speaker uses the set of language rules, referred to as *pragmatics* (Owens, 1996), to communicate messages effectively and to influence others through spoken or written language. Pragmatics allows the speaker to get his or her needs met through word choices as well as the use of pitch, volume, and inflection. It governs a child's ability to conduct a conversation effectively following the principles of language usage in social contexts. Linguists have referred to these conversational principles as *quantity*, *quality*, *relevance*, and *manner* (Gleason, 1997). These principles refer to the quantity of information appropriate to the communication, the truthfulness of that information, its relevance to the communication, its logic, and the socially acceptable manner in which the information is communicated.

LANGUAGE DYSFUNCTIONS

Children with learning disabilities may demonstrate difficulties with appropriate utilization of any or all of these components of language. Manifestations of the difficulties may range from overt to subtle. Typically, dysfunctions in phonology and morphology lead to problems learning to read and spell as well as long-term difficulty with reading fluency. There may be significant problems in phonology in terms of phoneme awareness, recall, memory, retrieval, and production. Reading success depends on adequate language development (Catts & Kamhi, 1999). The inability to isolate a sound (phoneme) auditorily creates a significant problem when the child is called on to attach the phoneme sound to the appropriate grapheme in the initial reading process.

Difficulties with semantics result in the reduced ability to extract meaning from spoken or written language and, more specifically, to grasp accurate meaning from multiple-meaning words, synonyms, and antonyms. Appropriate use of semantics requires both *word knowledge* and *world knowledge* (Owens, 1996, p. 22). Word knowledge refers to the size of one's vocabulary and personal mental dictionary of words and their meanings. World knowledge refers to a person's cumulative life experiences, memory, and comprehension of the events in his or her range of experiences. Typically, persons with learning disabilities use a more limited vocabulary when speaking than they may possess in their mental dictionaries. It is not uncommon for them to use malapropisms, to speak hesitantly, or to engage in circumlocution as they attempt to extract from memory the best words to successfully express themselves. Their written language often reveals an even more restricted vocabulary because of their fear of making spelling errors generated by deficits in the use of the underlying rules of morphology. The individual with learning disabilities may not comprehend jokes, puns, double entendre, indirect requests, and even sarcasm and may respond inappropriately to them when they are used in conversation by others (Mercer & Mercer, 1993). An example would be a student who laughs loudly before the speaker delivers the joke's punch line or one who says simply " I don't get it" when a rather simple, uncomplicated joke has been shared by someone in his or her group. Such a student might respond negatively or take no action at all when given an indirect request such as "Close the door." It is not uncommon for these children to become confused when confronted with statements such as the following:

Joe's dog is lost, and he feels blue.
The snow storm raged and soon the trapped boy was blue with cold.
This event occurs as often as a blue moon.

While the child may have appropriate knowledge of the color *blue*, the child may not be able to shift that knowledge to understand the meaning of *blue* in these new contexts. Additionally, a student with these kinds of language deficits may also answer rhetorical questions, much to the annoyance of the teachers, parents, siblings, and peers.

Problems with syntax often lead to stilted writing in which sentences are brief and void of the descriptors that add to the meaning and vitality to the message. Spoken language often reveals the same patterns, and there is a marked tendency among children with learning disabilities to be unable to process appropriately *wh*-questions (*who, what, where, when , why*), interrogatives, and negative sentences (Wigg & Semel, 1984).

However, the most common and debilitating of the language problems exhibited by persons with learning disabilities lie in the area of pragmatics. Very often, children with problems in pragmatics misread the body language or facial expressions of others. They tend to make socially inappropriate comments, fail to take turns during conversations, misunderstand directions for games and other activities, and either react aggressively or abruptly withdraw from social contact. General ability to engage in social interactions may be compromised. Their spoken language is often inappropriate in terms of pitch, stress, and volume, which results in their being deemed rude or inappropriately assertive by others who attempt to engage them in conversation. These problems in pragmatics experienced by children with learning disabilities may well affect their social, vocational, and academic performance and very likely will be carried into adulthood (Schumaker & Deshler, 1984).

CHALLENGES FOR SCHOOL COUNSELORS

When a school counselor attempts to work with a child or adolescent who has learning disabilities, he or she may experience difficulty because the youngster has an incomplete ability to comprehend what the counselor is trying to say, the counselor's body language, and ultimately the counselor's wishes for the youngster's success. In addition, the counselor must contend with the youngster's incomplete ability to express fully his or her own needs, concerns, fears, and wishes. Thus, counseling can become an exercise in communicating at cross-purposes. It is not uncommon for a youngster to express the concern that the counselor is yet another person who finds him or her wanting (Bergin & Bergin, 1999).

Quite often, teachers and other education professionals deal with the overt, acting-out behaviors and give no consideration to the student's underlying language deficits. Recently, a parent related an example of this difficulty as she spoke of her child who has learning disabilities. Her child had been observed by his teacher to have cut into line at lunch without any consideration to his classmates who were waiting patiently in the line. The teacher quickly walked to the child, removed the child from the line, and told him, "You can't cut in line!" The child replied, "Yes, I can," and proceeded to cut in line again.

Ready to punish the child, the teacher caught himself in time and instead made the following statement as he once again removed the child from line: "You shouldn't cut in line. It's not polite." The child responded, "Oh, okay," and promptly walked to the back of the line where he remained until his turn came. By thinking about the child's typical pattern of dealing with spoken communication concretely, the teacher was able to restructure his communication so the child "got the message" and reacted appropriately. Rather than scolding the child, pulling him from line, and administering a punishment, the teacher was able to correct the child's error and instruct him "on the spot."

STRATEGIES FOR COUNSELING

In light of the kinds of language communication and comprehension deficits often exhibited by children with learning disabilities, how might elementary school counselors use this knowledge of language dysfunction to interpret student responses correctly and make appropriate interventions? Counselors who serve on student support teams and pupil assessment teams should request that language skills be assessed and deficit areas be identified. Language assessment using both standardized and informal methods should become part of each assessment procedure. When deficits are identified, the data should become part of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) along with goals and objectives for helping the student improve those identified skills. Accommodations for and improvement of these global language problems cannot be left to speech pathology alone. They must be addressed by each education professional with whom the student comes into contact during the school day as well as by the student's parents siblings, caregivers, and significant others.

Likewise, school counselors can advocate for and help facilitate the active participation of the student at appropriate points in the IEP process so that the process itself can be understood by the student as positive and supportive, not secretive. The presence of the student at the meeting can serve to remind those professionals present to clarify discussions and explanations by removing or interpreting professional jargon that is often confusing to students and parents alike. Typically, elementary school students are not involved at any point in the referral, assessment, and IEP development processes, so they may readily interpret their needs for instructional assistance and accommodations as negative and perhaps even shameful. Children with language deficits may be very confused and distressed when adults do not explain events to them in terms that they can comprehend. This misunderstanding of the referral, assessment, and placement processes may result in the child's reluctance to use appropriate accommodations or become engaged in the special services to which he or she is entitled.

School counselors can support students with learning disabilities by helping them, along with their parents, come to terms with the disability. Parents' and students' reactions to the diagnosis of disability are often grief reactions and as such must be respected and dealt with appropriately (Mercer, 1997). Frank discussion, with careful probing for the student's understanding, is the key to helping the student adjust to the disability and to see that there are accommodations that can make the disability less intrusive and burdensome. The counselor should take care to avoid assuming that the student fully understands his or her role in the ownership of the disability. Nor should the counselor assume that the student has internalized the process of developing the necessary steps that can be taken to ameliorate its effects (Bergin & Bergin, 1999).

Group and individual counseling can be effective for parents and students to foster adjustment, reduce conflict, and eliminate dysfunctional attitudes toward authority, responsibility, and cultural factors (Klein, Altman, Dreizen, Friedman, & Powers, 1981a, 1981b). Reflective listening with careful probing for understanding is essential to assisting the learning disabled. The *gift of time* required for cognitive processing plus ongoing discussion, coupled with planning, is important to ensure that the student acquires the skills needed to cope successfully with the learning disability.

One difficulty not readily evident in counseling persons with learning disabilities is the need for extended time. This entails longer sessions to ensure that issues have been addressed with common understanding by both counselor and client. In addition, there is the need for extended periods of time over which counseling sessions will occur. Language-processing problems, memory dysfunction, and self-esteem issues often slow the typical counseling process when school counselors deal with students who have learning disabilities. The counselor must be prepared to adjust timing on the basis of these factors and others that are unique to the client (Bergin & Bergin, 1999).

Because of the problems of semantics and pragmatics typical of persons with learning disabilities, social skills instruction is of great importance, but care must be taken to ensure that language deficits will be addressed during such instruction. Role playing is helpful in dispelling misunderstandings that can occur through use of counseling techniques that depend on discussion alone. The counselor can incorporate into group counseling sessions and classroom guidance lessons unique programs such as *Skillstreaming the Elementary School Child* and *Skillstreaming the Adolescent* (McGinnis & Goldstein, 1997a, 1997b), which are designed to teach prosocial skills through modeling, role playing, and group performance feedback. These programs are particularly helpful because the students select issues from their own life experiences to examine in terms of specific content areas, including making and maintaining friendships, maintaining a conversation, choosing alternatives to aggression, managing stress, and controlling acting-out behaviors.

Videotaping allows both the players and the other group members to view the role-play interactions as often as necessary to reach consensus when proposing solutions to the problems and evaluating the effectiveness of these solutions. It is recommended that school counselors videotape group counseling sessions so that participants can watch themselves as they role play problem-solving involving confrontations with situations drawn from their real-life experiences. Repeated viewing can also be very beneficial in reinforcing the student's recall of best choices and remembering effective approaches to problem solving.

Another intervention technique that has proved helpful in assisting persons with learning disabilities is the use of mnemonic devices. Simple flow charts, pictures, and *consequence maps* (Voltz & Damiano-Lantz, 1993) can support the student's recall of goals, objectives, and the step-by-step plans for dealing with his or her identified areas of need. The consequence map involves the drawing of a simple chart that develops out of the discussion between counselor and client concerning an event and the possible consequences, both positive and negative, that can arise from the client's response to the event. To better understand consequence mapping, consider a situation in which a student is hesitant to approach a teacher for help with an assignment. The counselor and the student discuss what might happen if the student approaches the teacher and requests assistance. The positive along with the negative consequences of the student's proposed approaches can be evaluated as they are discussed using a cause–effect type map. The counselor and student continue to discuss consequences and then map a specific approach that they agree may have the most positive results. This step-by-step approach is highlighted by the student using a colored marker. The counselor keeps a copy of the map and gives the original to the student. The student now owns a concrete, easy-to-follow plan that can be used as reference to support the student as he or she approaches the teacher for help. Following the use of the consequence map, the counselor and the student assess results and discuss plans for further progress using the device. Overall, the use of mnemonic devices serves to reduce the effects of memory deficits and language problems typically experienced by persons with learning disabilities.

Despite problems with word attack skills and reading fluency commonly experienced by children with learning disabilities, school counselors can use bibliotherapy successfully with children who demonstrate language-centered learning disabilities if some simple accommodations are made. First, it is essential for the counselor and student to discuss any new or troublesome vocabulary that will be encountered in a new story. Then the counselor should read the story aloud in segments. Each segment should be followed immediately with a discussion of the feelings, characters, and situations encountered as well as any confusion arising from the language of the story. Of critical importance throughout the discussion is maintenance of a level of trust that will allow the student to be free to question new words or ideas and identify any areas of confusion during the discussions.

The counselor may use books-on-tape as an avenue to introducing bibliotherapy, but the same attention must be paid to preparing for new vocabulary and new concepts. Again the story should be broken into manageable listening segments that will be followed by discussion. The discussion is key to the student's understanding. Role playing the situations encountered in the listening sessions can also extend and deepen the student's understanding of the story and its unique message. Mnemonic devices may be used to extend the comprehension and recall of the outcomes of discussions. For example, a simple chart might be drawn to show how the positive reactions of a story's character to some problematic event are like the student's positive reactions to a similar problematic event in his or her experience (Bergin & Bergin, 1999).

SUMMARY

School counselors can be strong advocates for those children who may often misunderstand what is being said to them and who themselves are often misunderstood as they attempt to communicate with others. In summary, the key to successful counseling with children who have learning disabilities lies in the comprehension of the characteristics of learning disabilities, specifically the kinds of underlying language deficits that typically exist. Elementary school counselors committed to working with children with learning disabilities should educate themselves about the manifestations of these language problems. There is much information that can be of assistance but that cannot be covered adequately here. For that reason, a brief list of suggested readings has been added to the end of the chapter to help the reader extend his or her understanding of learning disabilities.

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APPENDIX

A LIST OF SUGGESTED READINGS

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Chapter 16

VALUING HUMAN DIVERSITY: COUNSELING MULTIRACIAL AND MULTIETHNIC CHILDREN

Eugenie Joan Looby

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS SINCE 1989 POINT TO over 2 million multiracial children in the United States (Jones & Rizzi, 1997). Rapid urbanization, social mobility, the emphasis on cultural pluralism, shifting attitudes, and blurring of racial boundaries have led to greater increase, acceptance, and support of interracial marriages, from which multiracial children are the offspring. Although the focus of research literature has been on the offspring of Black/White marriages, these increasing numbers encompass unlimited racial/ethnic configurations (i.e., White/Hispanic, Hispanic/Asian, Black/Asian, White/Native American, Black/White, White/Asian, Hispanic/Native American, Hispanic/Black, etc.).

The notion of increased acceptance of interracial marriages, however, does not translate into societal increased acceptance of multiracial children or that their psychosocial development will be problem free. Many institutions have been slow to acknowledge the unique needs of multiracial children. They cite arguments such as the population not being a distinct racial group (Thornton, 1992), the population being historically assigned the race of the parent of color (Cruz-Jansen, 1997; Daniel, 1996; Morrison & Rodgers, 1996), and the Bureau of Census practice of categorizing the American population into five distinct racial groups, none of which is multiracial (Wardle, 1998). Beginning with the 2000 Census, however, individuals are allowed to check on the census forms as many racial categories that apply to them. This decision is perceived by the multiracial community as an effort to acknowledge their mixed heritage and the unique problems engendered by their ancestry.

This chapter addresses the unique needs of multiracial children. It begins with a definition and clarification of terms and an explanation of racial identity classification of multiracial children. Next, the history of interracial families in the United States, the "one drop rule," and demographic trends are discussed. This is followed by an examination of prevailing myths and a discussion of advantages–disadvantages of a multiracial status. An in-depth examination of the literature on identity development of multiracial children and models of multiracial identity development are presented. The chapter concludes by delineating community imperatives to promote healthy identity development of multiracial children. Included are those by school counselors and other helping professionals, parents, the school (including activities and curriculum), and education personnel.

DEFINITION AND CLASSIFICATION

According to Wardle (1987, p. 55), various descriptors, such as "interracial, biracial, mixed, brown, and rainbow," have been used to name offspring of interracial marriages. Kerwin and Ponterotto (1995) noted that

> The term biracial is most often used to describe first generation offspring of parents of different races . . . the term biracial is consonant with terms such as bicultural and bilingual and is therefore preferred to terms such as mixed or interracial when referring to an individual. (p. 201)

Currently, the term *multiracial* seems more accurate because of its expansive and inclusive nature. This is the term that is used in this chapter. As Schwartz (1998b, p. 2) explained,

> It covers people not only of mixed race but monoracial people of mixed ethnicity, language and culture. . . . "Multiracial" is used here to indicate individuals of mixed racial, ethnic, or cultural ancestry whose lives reflect multiple heritages.

Also included in this definition are children who are transracially adopted.

In addition to deriving a suitable term or descriptor for multiracial children, there is considerable dialogue surrounding their racial identities. Identity formation and development of a sense of self are important tasks that children begin during childhood. Positive or negative labeling by significant others and the degree to which either is reinforced also affect a child's psychosocial development. Successful encounters are enhanced by supportive and affirming environments. For multiracial children, this becomes critical because of their multiple identities. Parents, therefore, foster identity choices for their multiracial children in several ways.

First, by classifying these children as human, parents avoid racial labeling. They contend that the acceptance of racial labels other than White puts their children at a distinct racial disadvantage. Labels also deprive the children of the power, privilege, and acceptance that being a member of the dominant group offers (Ladner, 1984; Pinderhughes, 1995).

Second, many multiracial families find value in encouraging their children to develop a multiracial identity that embodies all aspects of their heritage (Ladner, 1984; Pinderhughes, 1995). Third is the fostering of a monoracial identity. If the child's appearance is similar to that of the parent of color, the child is raised with the cultural identity of that parent because it is the model with which the parent is familiar (Ladner, 1984; Mills, 1994). Morrison and Rodgers (1996) contended that some parents choose to raise their multiracial children as children of color and teach them racial survival skills. This is necessary to combat the unequal treatment they may receive from members of the dominant culture as well as the family because of their racial status. Other families raise multiracial children to adopt a White identity, particularly if they look White enough, so that they can avoid experiencing racism (Miller & Rotheram-Borus, 1994). The fourth method is simply allowing the children to choose their preferred identity (Morrison & Rodgers, 1996).

Other researchers (Stephan, 1992; Thornton, 1996; Weisman, 1996) have discussed the complexities that arise with individuals who identify themselves as multiracial but do not have a strong allegiance to a racial or ethnic heritage nor resemble any of the groups they comprise. These individuals do not align themselves with anyone. They claim that identifying themselves as multiracial gives them membership in a new ethnic group which is an "amalgam of all the characteristics of other racial and ethnic groups, and its members are linked by the fact that each has multiple, albeit different heritages" (Schwartz, 1998a, p. 3).

Given the societal blurring of racial, ethnic, and cultural boundaries and the "browning" of America, this may serve as a strong argument for classifying multiracial individuals as a distinct racial group. To provide the background necessary for understanding the challenges that multiracial individuals experience, a historical review of the multiracial experience in the United States follows.

A TRACE OF HISTORY

In 1967, laws forbidding interracial marriages (antimiscegenation laws) were struck down by the United States Supreme Court; even then, 16 states still had such laws on their books (Jones & Rizzi, 1997; Wardle, 1991; White, 1997). Until as recently as 1983, the "one thirty second rule" (White, 1997, p. 3) still existed in Louisiana. According to this rule, "anyone with single black great-great-great-great-grandparent and 31 white great-great-great-great-grandparents was legally black" (White, 1997, p. 3).

Indeed this "one drop rule," as it is sometimes referred to, decreed that the offspring of racially diverse parents was legally non-White. This included children of all parents who had crossed ethnic and racial lines. These legal restraints were dictated by a White community that regarded interracial relationships as socially deviant and refused to acknowledge the offspring of such unions as White (Wardle, 1991). Even in states where interracial marriages were legal, couples sought residence in more tolerant, diverse communities and raised their children not as multiracial but as non-White.

Today, shifting attitudes and changing sociocultural dynamics have increased the number of interracial marriages in the United States to more than 3 million (White, 1997). Additionally, population demographics indicate that Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and Pacific Islanders will displace Whites as the majority population. White (1997, p. 2) contended that this trend will undoubtedly increase the numbers of "interracial, interethnic, and interreligious marriages, which will swell the ranks of interracial children," now numbering over 2 million (U.S. Bureau of the Census, cited in White, 1997).

As dramatic as the above figures may seem, some researchers claim that the numbers of multiracial children continue to be underestimated. Several reasons may serve as explanations. First, Kerwin and Ponterotto (1995) discussed the common practice at the National Center for Health Statistics of assigning newborns the mother's race, thus unceremoniously negating the father's race. Second, until the year 2000, the census form did not provide many racial categories for multiracial individuals. Third is the phenomenon of "passing," whereby children with a light complexion were encouraged by parents to assume a White identity to avoid experiencing the difficulties of being raised as a child of color (Millner, 1998; Wardle, 1991). Fourth, offspring of unwed multiracial couples as well as those of multiracial parents who raise their child with a single race designation may not be included (Winn & Priest, 1993). For these reasons, the true numbers of multiracial offspring in the United States may never be determined.

Although there is increasing acceptance of multiracial children, there has been very little recognition that these children have unique needs. Because of the uncertainty of their racial classification, professionals continue to label multiracial children as children of color, ascribing to them similar accompanying needs and traits. This is in keeping with the tendency of placing individuals into already established categories and devising resources to support such designations. This may help to reduce dissonance and ambiguity but also exacerbates an already complex problem.

To further compound the issue, the professional literature speaks to the circuitous nature of the psychosocial development of multiracial children. Some researchers (Gibbs, 1987; Herring, 1992; McRoy & Freeman, 1986; Shackford, 1984) point to a number of problems faced by these children because of their multiple ancestry. These are contradicted by other studies, which support the notion that interracial children are oftentimes more well adjusted than their counterparts (Gibbs, 1987; Thornton, 1996) and that there are many advantages inherent in being raised as multiracial. It has also been suggested that caregivers would be remiss in not providing multiracial children with the necessary tools to combat the racism, discrimination, and mistreatment that they may experience from individuals in the dominant culture as well as from family members (Jones & Rizzi, 1997; Ladner, 1984; Wardle, 1987).

Despite the growing acceptance of interracial marriages and the multiracial offspring who are products of these marriages, controversy still exists about the racial classification of multiracial children and their place in the cultural hierarchy. Furthermore, the unique needs of these children continue to be ignored or unmet. Some professionals may not understand the complex nature of a multicultural heritage or the difficulties inherent in trying to establish an identity in a society that clearly delineates specific racial classifications. The next section focuses on myths about multiracial children discussed in the professional literature.

MYTHS ABOUT MULTIRACIAL CHILDREN

This section delineates common societal myths regarding multiracial children. These myths, cited in the works of the following researchers (Gibbs, 1987; Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995; McRoy & Freeman, 1986; Melina, 1990; Wardle,1988, 1992), claim that:

- multiracial children are consumed by identity conflicts
- multiracial children suffer more psychosocial problems than their counterparts
- multiracial children are destined for mental health problems
- multiracial children must identify with one racial group
- multiracial children must be raised in the heritage of their parent of color
- multiracial children will be defined as Black (or the dominant color), so they must be raised that way
- single-race children do not experience similar negative treatment from other children and adults as do multiracial children
- being multiracial is greater than any other individual difference
- the negative impact of being multiracial is more destructive than any other negative experience a child might have
- multiracial children do not want to discuss their identity
- minority groups are more accepting of multiracial children than individuals from the dominant culture

Many of these myths perpetuate the notion that multiracial children are doomed to a lifetime of psychosocial difficulty, poor identity development, and problems of social marginality because of their heritage. These myths should be regarded as suspect. The socialization process for multiracial children is different than it is for White and minority children, yet these children continue to be classified, labeled, and treated as children of color, without a recognition of their multiple heritage.

Developmental theorists point to the importance of a supportive, nurturing environment to encourage healthy psychosocial development. Multiracial children have to master the same developmental tasks that single-race children do, in addition to integrating their multiple ancestry into a developing sense of self. There is no evidence that ensuing problems are caused solely by a multiracial identity or that being multiracial makes children targets for additional hostility and discrimination. Problems may be caused by their multiracial status but also by developmental milestones or other childhood stressors. Multiracial children possess a unique heritage that should be prized. Educators and professionals who work with these children should realize that each heritage is different and that there are advantages to being raised multiracial. It is to these advantages that the next section turns.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF A MULTIRACIAL STATUS

Multiracial children experience both advantages and obstacles as they attempt to define their individual personalities. Schwartz (1998a) identified several factors that may play a critical role in this process. They include characteristics such as resilience and a strong sense of self; a cohesive, stable, nurturing family environment; equally supportive institutions of which the child is a part; geographic location; the number and acceptance of multiracial families in the child's neighborhood; and the degree of racism, discrimination, and ostracism present in the child's environment. The degree to which the above and other factors are present or absent may or may not affect the child.

Several researchers (Gay, 1987; Johnson & Nagoshi, 1986; Kerwin, Ponterotto, Jackson, & Harris, 1993; Poussaint, 1984; Schwartz, 1998a; Thornton, 1996; Wardle, 1991) have pointed to the advantages that can be realized by individuals with a multiracial heritage. They are as follows:

- acquiring a broader cultural education
- exposure to more diversity and multiple world views
- enhanced, positive sense of self
- greater acceptance and appreciation of others
- greater appreciation of other cultures and heritages
- flexibility in considering issues
- opportunities for exposure to different lifestyles, mannerisms, and cultural norms
- the ability to cull the best from multiple backgrounds and use those elements to their advantage
- adapt quickly to many cultural environments
- adaptability, creativity, flexibility, and resiliency
- well-developed coping skills
- more independent and assertive

Much of the available literature (Baruth & Manning, 1999; Benson, 1981; Gibbs, 1987; Herring, 1995; Jones & Rizzi, 1997; Ladner, 1977; McRoy & Freeman, 1986; Schwartz, 1998a; Sebring, 1985; Wardle, 1992) on multiracial children and youths also points to obstacles that they may face. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- psychological and behavioral problems
- substance abuse, psychosomatic disorders, suicidal behaviors
- difficulty in identifying with the racial minority parent
- difficulty with deciding an identity of choice
- self-hatred, denial of self, anxiety, alienation, depression, loneliness
- delinquency, truancy, disruptive behaviors in school, fighting
- poor academic achievement, off-task behaviors, poor social skills
- lack of minority role models for children socialized in the dominant culture
- guilt and disloyalty for having rejected the heritage of one parent
- gender confusion
- vulnerable to mistreatment by parents, peers, relatives, school personnel, and the community
- adjusting to a predominantly White environment
- familial and societal racism and rejection
- separation from parents and familial rejection
- conflict about career aspirations

IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT OF MULTIRACIAL CHILDREN

In an effort to understand the challenges inherent in developing a positive racial identity for multiracial children, this section discusses identity development in light of current developmental theories. Traditional and current imperatives on multiracial identity development and extant models of multiracial identity development conclude the section.

Identity Development and the Multiracial Child

The scant literature related to counseling multiracial children has indicated that their unique needs have been generally ignored by some professionals (Gibbs, 1987; Schwartz, 1998a, 1998b; Sebring, 1985; Wardle, 1992), that the process of identity development is different and more difficult for these children than it is for White and minority children (Ladner, 1977; Sebring, 1985; Wardle, 1992), and that establishing a racial/ethnic identity is a developmental task begun in early childhood (Derman-Sparks & the ABC Task Force, 1989; Phinney, 1991).

Providing an answer to the question "Who am I?" is a complex one for the multiracial child. The parameters are often unclear and difficult to decipher. Society's definitions, parental and family definitions, and their own individual sense of identity may be in direct opposition to each other. This may cause complications and formidable challenges. If not resolved, the consequences can manifest themselves in feelings of marginalization, isolation, loneliness, and mental health problems.

The identity development of multiracial children has been virtually ignored in the human development literature. Existing evidence suggests that the preschool and elementary periods, which approximate 3–7 years, are searching and significant for all children. It is here that children become aware of and begin to question racial/ethnic differences (McRoy & Freeman, 1986; Wardle, 1992). Payne (1977) claimed that by age 3, children are able to distinguish skin color. Goodman (1964) and Porter (1971) reported feelings of prejudice and racial awareness in 3-year-olds, and Jacobs (1977) found that by age 4½, children are able to identify themselves as multiracial.

McRoy, Zurcher, Lauderdale, and Anderson (1984) found that transracially adopted 3-year-olds had some sense of ethnicity, and Gunthorpe (1978) reported that children recognized racial differences among dolls with varying shades of skin color. Adejando-Wright (1985) believed that the racial identity is an abstract notion for children under age 10, whereas other researchers contend that adolescence is the stage at which identity development issues, including developing a racial identity, take center stage (Gibbs, 1987). Consequently, if a healthy identity is not nurtured and fostered in early childhood, this may prove conflictual as children move into later stages of development (Adler, 1987; Herring, 1992).

Wardle (1992) discussed the parallel between this time period (ages 3–7), Piaget's preoperational cognitive stage of development, and Erikson's psychosocial stage of initiative versus guilt. At the preoperational stage, children are egocentric; only able to focus on one stimulus at a time; have trouble with reverse thinking; and use mental images, imagination, and symbolic thought to organize their world. They are capable of understanding simple rules that they regard as unchangeable; are influenced by what they hear, see, or experience; develop phenomenal language explosion; and constantly use those skills to develop understanding and mastery of their world (Orton, 1996; Piaget, 1950; Piaget & Inhelder, 1969; Thompson & Rudolph, 1999).

Erickson's stage of initiative versus guilt is marked by children who are dynamic, independent, curious, active, assertive, and self-reliant; they seek to discover who they are and what they can do as they make a foray into the wider social world (Erikson, 1950; Orton, 1996; Thompson & Rudolph, 1999). They model behaviors of significant others and rely on approval. How that sense of initiative is encouraged and received by others in the child's environment, including parents, teachers, caregivers, and significant others, will crystallize into a well-integrated or weakened racial identity (Erikson, 1968; McRoy & Freeman, 1986; Wardle & Baptiste, 1988).

On the basis of the above information, Wardle (1992) purported the following charge to parents, caregivers, educators, counselors, and other professionals who interact with multiracial children:

> Young children need to be able to ask questions about race, should be allowed to experiment (with labels, ideas, concepts, etc.), do not have a fixed or sophisticated idea about racial identity, need a single word to label who they are, and will strongly adhere to some wrong concepts, at least temporarily. (p. 3)

Models of Multiracial Identity Development

Racial identity development may be conceptually defined as valuing, being proud of, celebrating, and appreciating one's racial, ethnic, and cultural heritage (Sue & Sue, 1999). Multiracial identity development is much more nebulous and undifferentiated. The following models have important implications for racial group identification and the development of a healthy, multiracial self-identity in children.

Kich (1982) reported that all multiracial individuals experience three successive stages of identity development: a sense of being different, struggle for acceptance and ultimately self- acceptance, and the ability to assert a multiracial identity. LaFromboise, Coleman, and Gerton (1993) postulated an alternation model that focuses on second-culture acquisition. Competencies such as cultural knowledge positive attitudes toward bicultural competence, positive attitudes toward the contact group, living satisfactorily within more than one group, communicating effectively in both cultures, adhering to each culture's ascribed behaviors and roles, and having a good support system are necessary to function effectively. These competencies are equally applicable to individuals reared in multiracial families.

McRoy and Freeman (1986) reported that racial identity development encompasses the child's ability to make racial distinctions and the child's racial group membership self-evaluation. Jacobs (1992) proposed that racial identity formation for multiracial children include the following stages:

1. *Precolor constancy*: The child comprehends that skin color does not change and that color is nonevaluative.
2. *Postcolor constancy*: The child recognizes the permanence of his or her own skin color, rejects one racial group or another, internalizes a multiracial label, and experiences ambivalence about racial identity.
3. *Biracial identity*: The child reconciles the perceptual distortions presented by variations in skin color of family and self and realizes that racial group membership is a consequence of parentage, not skin color.

Poston (1990) presented a five-stage model predicated on information from support groups and extant literature on multiracial individuals. Poston acknowledged that although there are numerous factors that affect multiracial identity development, all multiracial individuals will encounter periods of confusion and difficulty as they experience these stages. Family and community support are key during these critical periods of identity development. The stages include the following:

1. *Personal identity*: The child's sense of self is independent of group identity and is dependent on self-esteem and feelings of self-worth engendered in the family.
2. *Choice of group categorization*: The individual feels pressured to identify with one racial group because of factors such as status, social support, peer groups, family acceptance, and physical appearance. A multiethnic identity is not a choice here because the child does not possess the knowledge or cognitive complexity to make such a decision.
3. *Enmeshment/denial*: This stage is marked by confusion and guilt over having to choose an identity inconsistent with the individual's heritage. Feelings of guilt, shame, disloyalty, self-hatred, betrayal, and confusion may be manifested here.
4. *Appreciation*: Increased appreciation of a multiracial identity and broadened reference group occur, although the individual still identifies with one racial group.
5. *Integration*: Wholeness and the development of an integrated identity mark this stage.

Kerwin and Ponterotto (1995) presented a six-stage model of multiracial identity development that includes the following:

1. *Preschool*: This period spans up to 5 years of age and is marked by a developing racial awareness.
2. *Entry to school*: This period is marked by the tendency to ask questions about race, to have an awareness of social groups and their distinguishing features, to classify others, to use labels for self and family, and to use descriptors for skin color (e.g., "coffee and cream," p. 211).
3. *Preadolescence*: There is recognition in this period that factors such as skin color, physical appearance, culture, and language are elements of their racial group identification. Labels are used to distinguish groups by race, ethnicity, and religion.
4. *Adolescence*: Developmental milestones and societal dictates make this a challenging period. Peer and societal pressure to identify with one racial group may present difficulties for the adolescent.
5. *College/young adulthood*: Identification with one culture and denial of the other continues in this stage. However, as the individual becomes exposed to a broader range of experiences and develops a stronger personal identity, appreciation of a multiracial identity becomes evident. If the individual successfully masters this stage, then a realistic acceptance of self and a multiracial identity follow.
6. *Adulthood*: If the individual has successfully mastered the above stages, continued development and valuing of a multiracial identity remain present through adulthood.

McRoy and Zurcher (1983) cited six environmental factors that enhance positive multiracial identity development in children. They include the following:

1. Parents and significant others discuss racial heritage with children.
2. Parents and significant others engage in efforts to promote a positive racial identity.
3. Children are provided unlimited opportunities to experience multiracial environments, including neighborhoods, peers, schools, and educational experiences.
4. Children and parents are exposed to positive multiracial role models and have frequent contacts with multiracial organizations and institutions.

5. Children are taught to develop positive attitudes regarding individuals of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, including their own.
6. The family identifies itself as multiracial and acts to reinforce that identity.

The discourse on multiracial identity development indicates a complex and nebulous process affected by myriad environmental variables. Successful resolution depends on a nurturing family, the cultural perspectives of both parents, and equally nurturing societal institutions. The next section discusses initiatives to support the unique heritage of multiracial children.

INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Intervention strategies that support multiracial children should include not only those that are school initiated but also those that involve significant support systems and community institutions. Resources mentioned in this section include, but are not limited to, the following: school counselors and other helping professionals, parents, the school (activities and curriculum), and educators and school personnel.

School Counselors and Other Helping Professionals

A number of researchers (Adler, 1987; Gibbs, 1987; Herring, 1995; Lyles, Yancey, Grace, & Carter, 1985; Okun, 1996; Poston, 1990; Ramos, 1990; Sebring, 1985; Thompson & Rudolph, 1999) feel that it is imperative for counselors and other professionals who work with multiracial children and youth in schools and other settings to do the following:

- develop an empathic and genuine working relationship with the child
- recognize that the presenting problem may or may not be related to ethnic concerns
- create a safe climate in which the child can ventilate feelings about his or her racial/ethnic identity
- understand the multiracial identity development process
- help to build the child's self-esteem and validate his or her multiple heritage
- encourage the child to develop pride in his or her multiracial heritage
- become culturally competent and aware and develop culturally sensitive counseling skills
- serve as a psychoeducational resource
- work with and involve the family to promote cultural pride and individual and family growth
- learn about the child's heritage by participating in cultural events and activities
- educate self about the sociopolitical and environmental factors that affect the child
- be aware of personal stressors experienced by the child because of a multiracial heritage
- provide accurate assessment, intervention, and counseling techniques
- help the child develop a positive racial identity
- serve as advocates to promote awareness and interest in the needs and strengths of this population
- ensure competent, effective, and respectful service delivery to this population
- examine attitudes, beliefs, and values toward interracial mixing
- examine incorrect race-based preconceptions and correct when and where necessary

Nishimura (1995) suggested that school counseling programs foster the positive development of all students by using developmental counseling programs. Including issues of multiracial children as part of the developmental counseling curriculum for monoracial as well as multiracial individuals highlights and celebrates diversity and respect for individual differences. To foster this, the school counselor should (a) examine personal values and perceptions about multiracial children and interracial marriages, (b) provide numerous models of varying family structures, (c) emphasize multiple cultural heritages instead of a select few, (d) acknowledge the many elements of diversity, and (e) develop sensitivity to the feelings of multiracial children when issues surrounding personal and group identity are discussed.

Parenting Multiracial Children

Wang (2000) and Wardle (1989) offered the following suggestions for parents of multiracial children:

- be open about racial differences
- be open about the child's differences
- be an advocate for the child
- encourage positive relationships with both sides of the family
- teach the child about the richness of his or her multiple heritage
- teach the child about other cultures
- serve as a role model by surrounding yourself with other multiracial individuals
- expose the child to a variety of cultural experiences
- prepare the child for the prejudice and racism that he or she may experience because of a multiracial heritage
- do not automatically assume that there are racial undercurrents to every problem that the child experiences
- help the child to develop a strong sense of identity and self

Activities and Curriculum

A child's identity is shaped by feedback and support from significant others and socialization outside the family. One of the child's first socializing institutions is the school. This is where the child experiences the world outside the supportive web of parents and significant others. It is also where the child realizes that he or she may be different from the other children. Early childhood educators, therefore, play a pivotal role in creating a climate that will honor the rich multiracial heritage of the child and promote a strong identity. The classroom can be used as a powerful tool to educate multiracial and monoracial children about the value of diversity and appreciating the heritage of others. A listing of some selected school and curriculum activities follows.

School Activities Several researchers (Morrison & Rodgers, 1996; Wardle, 1992, 1996, 1998) have suggested the following classroom activities that teachers can initiate:

- celebrate and commemorate multiple heritages
- invite multiracial speakers from a variety of cultures to address assemblies or engage in similar activity
- invite children to bring pictures of their family and other ethnic groups and place these on the bulletin board

- invite children to decorate the classroom with pictures/posters/collages of their family as well as a variety of families and people in the world
- have each child develop a family tree
- provide toys, games, puzzles, multiracial dolls, colored paint, crayon, and art supplies that reflect different skin tones, as well as other play materials that represent many cultural backgrounds
- ask children to create self-portraits
- during reading time, provide a variety of books and reading material about different racial groups
- invite parents or representatives from multiple ethnic groups to read stories to the class
- take children on field trips to various sites that celebrate different cultures (i.e., Indian reservation, museum, etc.).

School Curriculum Morrison and Rodgers (1996) and Wardle (1992, 1996, 1998) indicated that the school curriculum can engage in the following to support multiracial children:

- discuss all types and variations of families
- use a variety of media (books, films, photographs, movies, magazines) to educate students about the variety of cultures in the world
- have available multiple books for reading that celebrate cultural diversity
- teach lessons about multiracial heroes
- integrate topics such as culture, race, and diversity into all aspects of the curriculum
- select textbooks for all subject areas that depict multiracial individuals in a positive, nonstereotypical manner
- discuss issues such as prejudice, racism, discrimination, and stereotyping
- avoid breaking groups into skin color
- expose children to a variety of music
- highlight the accomplishments of multiracial individuals in all subject areas in the curriculum

Educators and School Personnel

Educators and school personnel can support the positive development of multiracial children by doing the following (Schwartz, 1998b; Wardle, 1992):

- examine personal views on race and interracial marriages
- identify the unique characteristics of each multiracial child and how it can be positively fostered
- educate themselves about multiracial families
- invite parental participation in all school activities and use parents as resources to help promote the child's heritage
- avoid assuming that the child's problems are a consequence of his or her multiracial status
- do not insist that multiracial parents categorize their child
- do not allow negative or racist comments
- participate in diversity training sessions and staff development activities
- become familiar with resources available to support multiracial children
- sincerely commit to promoting healthy multiracial development

SUMMARY

Population demographics indicate that the numbers of multiracial/multiethnic children will continue to increase given the browning of American society. The literature purports that little has been done to meet the needs of this population. School counselors and educators are in pivotal positions to remedy this oversight. They can serve as advocates with a quest of helping multiracial children develop positive racial identities and appreciation of their multiracial heritage. The school setting also provides unlimited opportunities to educate multiracial and monoracial children about acceptance, affirmation, and valuing human diversity. As one of the major socializing influences for children, it is critical that school systems derive imperatives to fulfill this mission.

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Chapter 17

COUNSELING IMMIGRANT CHILDREN IN SCHOOL SETTINGS: WHAT SCHOOL COUNSELORS SHOULD DO

Mei Tang

THE U.S. POPULATION WILL BECOME MORE diversified than ever in the new millennium. It is projected that the rapid increase of the U.S. minority population will reach its peak by 2050 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1998). Among the increased number of minority members, many are recent immigrants and their dependents. Children of immigrant families have to go to schools for education, which presents a challenge for the children, the families, and the school. Immigrants experience many life changes in various aspects, including use of a new language, frequent transition, and resettlement. Immigrant children, particularly, have gone through a very difficult time in their transition from a familiar environment to an unfamiliar environment; they are basically caught in two cultures (Berger, 1996; Glasgow & Gouse-Sheese, 1995). This chapter presents the profiles of immigrant children in schools and the diversity of this particular population in a historical perspective. The chapter also discusses the variety of issues affecting children from immigrant families and the challenges presented to school counselors and personnel. The counseling interventions and strategies are discussed from both cross-cultural counseling theories and developmental perspectives. Different roles that school counselors can assume are also discussed.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE OF IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

Since the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, there has been a noticeable change not only in the numerical figures but also in the number of immigrants' original country. In the 19th century and the early part of the 20th century, most immigrants came from Europe, and a very small number of immigrants came from other continents (Stewart, 1993). That small number of non-European immigrants usually were restricted to manual, low-paid labor. For a long time, families in the homeland were not allowed to join the immigrants from Asia. But the effect of the 1965 Act has changed this situation profoundly. For instance, between 1901 and 1920, 85% of the immigrants came from Europe and only 4% came from Asia and Latin America. From 1980 to 1990, 48% newly arriving immigrants came from Asia, 35% from Latin America, and only 10% from Europe (Stewart, 1993). The number of immigrants doubled from 1960s to 1990s; the number of refugees also doubled from 1985 through early 1990s (Fix & Zimmermann, 1993). By 2010, the school-age immigrants will increase to 9.1 million, accounting for more than half of the increase in school-age population (Fix & Zimmermann, 1993).

The U.S. Census (1998) data clearly show that the U.S. population comprises people of various birth places, lengths of residence in the community, cultural backgrounds, linguistic backgrounds, and religion. Immigrants have a great within-group variation in terms of their demographics as well. Some new immigrants are well educated, economically well to do, and psychologically ready for transition. Some are more likely to be at a disadvantage for resources and opportunities—they lack familiarity with the host culture and may suffer from acculturative stress. The influx of refugees into the United States in the last two decades also contributed to the increased number of immigrants in today's society. This group of involuntary immigrants encounters even more difficult issues (Gibson & Ogbu, 1991).

Thus, immigrants are diverse in terms of their origin, length of residency in the United States, and temporal context when they migrate. It is harmful to assume that every immigrant shares the same experiences of living in the host country. Such assumption neglects the uniqueness of each individual and misleads educators and helping professionals to underserve immigrants and their families. In other words, immigrants might be underserved because of the insufficient sensitivity to pertinent issues.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN FROM IMMIGRANT FAMILIES

If there is any different characteristic between immigrant children and nonimmigrant children, it must be the experiences of transition. Although they often relocate to a different school district or a new city as a result of their parents' job situation or family situation, native-born children generally move around the same or similar cultural environment; in other words, they are still able to speak English, watch the same TV programs, play the same kind of games, and probably have the same kind of friends. However, for immigrant children, transition means something very different. They are basically uprooted from their own cultural environment (Igoa, 1995). The migration is usually decided by parents with good intention to provide better opportunities for their children, but the children may not necessarily understand fully what is actually involved in moving to a new country. What immigrant children experience is literally cultural shock.

Because of the abrupt change of lifestyles, many immigrant children have suffered from confusion, loneliness, depression, and exhaustion (Igoa, 1995). Igoa noticed from working with newly arriving immigrant children that they tend to go through a silent age at the beginning of schooling because of their unfamiliarity with the language as well as the school structure and operations. Immigrant children usually have no friends or few friends, again, because they are put into a very different environment. When a group of immigrant children were asked about their initial encountering problems, isolation was commonly listed as one of the problems these immigrant children had to deal with when they attended American schools (Igoa, 1995). Even those children who have been in the country for a longer period of time still feel caught between two cultures. On the one hand, they feel the pressure to assimilate, to be in conformity with their peers, and to have a sense of being part of the group; on the other hand, they fear losing their familial and cultural identity, as well as feel insecure and intimidated (Cardenas, Taylor, & Adelman, 1993). Some children joining their immigrant parents later after many years (ranging from 4 to 25 years) experienced rejection and abandonment because of length of separation (Glasgow & Gouse-Sheese, 1995).

Because of the migration, resettlement, and parents' constantly seeking better places to live, many immigrant children have fragmented formal schooling, which leads to academic problems. The academic difficulties experienced by many recently arriving children are particularly pronounced considering the difference between educational systems in their home country and in the United States. Wei (1980) found that Vietnamese refugee students manifest problems in learning styles and student–teacher relationship. The classroom activities involving group projects, independent projects, and library projects were uncommon for Vietnamese students; American teachers' informality and friendliness were shocking to them as well. In Vietnam, the teachers have the absolute authority and power. Similarly, Yao (1985) found that Asian American children of immigrant status tend to be field-dependent learners, seldom reveal their opinions, and show deference to teachers. Limited English proficiency also contributes to the difficulties of doing well in academics, at least in the beginning.

Nonetheless, immigrant children generally like schools because their parents pass on the belief that American schools provide far more superior educational opportunities than what is offered in their homeland (Ogbu, 1991). The immigrant students and their families rely on schools and usually have a trusting relationship with the school personnel. Gibson and Ogbu (1991) found that immigrant students showed better attendance records, had fewer discipline problems, spent more time on homework, and elected more demanding classes in high school. In effect, "Educational credentials . . . are their best hedge against discrimination" (Gibson & Ogbu, 1991, p. 362). Teachers respond positively toward immigrant children. When teachers' comments on students were gathered from students' cumulative files, the results indicated that 61% of new immigrants were well motivated to learn, and 29% of them were fast, bright learners (McDonnell & Hill, 1993). The same study also found that students who had made normal progress in their home country could usually take regular or even higher mathematics but might have difficulties in English, and that after experiencing initial difficulties, new immigrants could catch up in the college preparatory courses. However, depending on the socioeconomic status and location of their residency, immigrant students might have different performance in schools. For instance, some new immigrants living in the urban ghettos had very restricted resources. Seldom do they know where and how to seek help. Children might be living in poverty and receive little supervision at home because their parents are struggling to make ends meet. Dentler and Hafner (1997) reported that students with higher levels of poverty, limited English proficiency, and ethnic status tended to have lower average achievement scores.

The issues such as difficulties in adjusting to a new culture, confusion about being caught up in two cultures, and differences in school systems between home countries and current states present a great challenge for immigrant children. Each individual's capacity and motivation to adjust to the new environment varies. It is not uncommon to observe the newly arriving immigrant children behaving quite differently at school and at home. Some children choose to be selectively mute at school and speak the native language at home (Igoa, 1995). Although it may sound out of the ordinary, this is easy to understand considering the fact that schools can be a strange environment but home is still relatively the same environment with mom and dad around. Selective mutism may be an indicator for uncertainty experienced by immigrant children. Sometimes, psychological transition is even more difficult to deal with. Igoa (1995) found that immigrant children feel vulnerable, have a need to be understood, and have a need for friends, for recognition, and for affirmation from teachers.

As discussed above, children themselves do not make the decision to migrate. Their parents make the choice with the intention to provide them a better opportunity, but this opportunity is shrouded in risk even unknown to their parents. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the dynamics of immigrants' families. The function of family significantly affects children's life.

FAMILY DYNAMICS OF IMMIGRANT FAMILIES

Many parents of immigrant families believe their sacrifice would bring upon future benefits for their children (Ogbu, 1991; Suarez-Orozco, 1991). Immigrant parents want their children to have a better education (Igoa, 1995) and make a better living. Because parents themselves usually have to struggle for survival as the first-generation immigrants, they particularly emphasize education for their children, hoping education will prepare their children well to make the accomplishment that the parents themselves would have done but could not because of the difficulties as the first-generation immigrants. However, this may not always be understood and appreciated by the next generation. The numerous difficulties experienced by immigrant families are reviewed next.

Family cohesiveness diminishes as the result of immigration for many families (Yao, 1985). It may be due to the temporary or permanent separation from parents for some children because of difficulties of obtaining immigrant visas or the complex situation in their native countries. Yao (1985) argued that employment and economic needs and educational pursuits often change the roles of family members. The patriarchal tradition of many Asian and Hispanic cultures expects husbands to be the providers for family living expenses; however, once having immigrated to United States, some husbands may lose their status of being the sole breadwinner in the family because the family may need multiple sources of income to make ends meet. This means wives or even children sometimes have to work. Because of the lack of language skills and discrepancies of education, many immigrants cannot find high-paying professional jobs as they might have had in the native countries. The available jobs are usually low paying and require less language and professional skill, and some of these jobs are more related to household duties, such as babysitting and housekeeping. In this case, immigrant women have better chances finding a job compared with immigrant men.

Parent–child relationship declines as well in immigrant families. As discussed earlier, immigrant parents view education as the key to a better future for their children, and they are willing to do everything they can to provide their offspring the opportunity for better schooling. Immigrant parents often make an effort to move out of the poor urban neighborhoods to a better one for the sake of quality education. For instance, Asian parents may be quiet, submissive on the appearance, but have passionate interests in the educational welfare of their children (Stewart, 1993). However, the parental sacrifice may not be understood or appreciated by the youngsters, because immigrant children themselves experience many difficulties as a result of the change of environment. Children might find that their parents lack or are at least deficient in the capacity to help them solve the problems. For many reasons (inefficiency in language, unfamiliarity with culture, etc.), parents do experience a lack of confidence or capability to help their children. Children, however, have to fulfill high expectation of the parents despite their difficulties. Thus, the parent–child relationship can become tense: On the one hand, parents feel unappreciated because they do not think their children understand how much sacrifice immigrant parents have made for their children; on the other hand, immigrant children feel unsupported because their parents are not adequately capable of offering the help they need.

Change of roles of family members is common for immigrant families. This phenomenon occurs partially because of the different levels of language proficiency of parents and children. Children usually are more apt to learn a new language. Actually, the second-language researchers concluded that people can master the second language at a proficient level if they are exposed to and learn the language at or before early adolescence, that is, about 12–13 years old (Krashen, 1985). Immigrant parents usually have difficulties communicating with other people because of their stronger accent (at least at the beginning). Immigrant children, however, pick up the language much faster and do not have an accent in most cases. The language proficiency variation puts immigrant parents and children at different levels of communication competency to deal with the outside world. In this case, parents almost always rely their children to speak for them because they think their children's accent-free English would ease the communication process with other people. Stewart (1993) found that 49% of the immigrant children they studied functioned as interpreters for their parents. Interpreting for the family is not that problematic if the content is appropriate for children to be involved. However, it is truly questionable if children are interpretating words that are not appropriate for their developmental level.

In addition to the language proficiency differences, there is a gap between parents' and children's acculturation levels. The different levels of acculturation can also contribute to the change in family structure. One study found that because Chinese parents had a longer term of immigration, they rated families higher on independence and monitoring and lower on conformity (Rosenthal & Feldman, 1990). The same study also found that immigrant families with a longer term of immigration tended to have an authoritative father. When compared with nonimmigrant families, immigrants stressed achievement and were more structured and controlling (Rosenthal & Feldman, 1990). Yao (1985) argued that because of the immigration status, traditional family structure is challenged. Such challenge arises because role reversal often exists among immigrant families. For instance, a student asked his teacher for a leave of absence from school because he had to take his parent to see a doctor. As Stewart (1993) noted, "Role reversals are typical of immigrant students and their parents . . . if this causes disturbance for parents unused to looking up to a child for important functions, it places unnatural pressure and responsibility on often very young children as well" (p. 93). It is argued that role reversal occurs because children often are more acculturated than their parents; therefore, children appear to be more efficacious than their parents to manage the task of daily life duties. Acculturation has been found to be an important role in minority members' psychological adjustment (Cross, 1995; Helms, 1995; Sandhu, 1997). As a result, the highly acculturated children become the resource persons from whom lower acculturated parents seek consultation or help. This would certainly challenge the traditional hierarchical structure in the family.

Another aspect of family dynamics is related to the immigrant parents' interaction with schools. School is perceived as instrumental in providing their children with better work opportunities and much-needed skills in the host country by immigrant parents. In some cultures, parents do not want to intervene in school affairs (Gibson & Ogbu, 1991). A study about Haitian students found that parents of these students rely on and trust schools and do not want to intervene in any of the school activities. In Haitian culture, parents expect schools to take most of the responsibility (Giles, 1990). While they trust schools to take charge of their children's education, immigrant parents want to ensure the youngsters maintain their heritage and identity. Children then are caught between what is expected at home and at school because sometimes the expectations from these two places are not necessarily consistent.

Nonetheless, it seems that parental involvement is vital in the educational process of children. In fact, parental involvement has been found to make a significant difference in achievement of immigrant Korean families (Lee, 1991). Lee's study compared the immigrant Koreans in the United States and in Japan and found that the Korean immigrant students in the United States had higher achievement than their counterparts in Japan. The study also found that the Korean families in the United States were more involved in their children's schooling because they were in better financial position. Accordingly, Korean immigrants in the United States were perceived by other parents, teachers, and peers as competent in academic and related achievements. However, the Korean immigrants in Japan were usually from lower socioeconomic backgrounds; parents were busy making a living and did not have time to mind their children's education. Therefore, Lee argued that environmental and socioeconomic status played an important role in immigrant children's well-being.

ISSUES FACING IMMIGRANT CHILDREN

As discussed earlier, immigrant children encounter many difficulties and challenges because they are caught in a unique situation. They have to deal with both developmental and sociocultural transitions simultaneously (Berger, 1996). Transitional failure could come from both personal and environmental variables (Cardenas et al., 1993). On the personal level, immigrant children vary in their readiness to interact with the new cultural environment depending on their age, mastery of the new language and cultural knowledge, willingness of migration, and personalities. Some may fear losing their familial and cultural identity and then feel insecure and intimidated (Cardenas et al., 1993). On the environmental level, different schools vary in their preparation to address the transitional needs of immigrant students. A supportive and friendly environment surely would smooth the transition process. Failure of managing the transitional tasks can be manifested in poor school attendance and performance, somatic complaints, negative affect, and misbehavior. In addition, Esquivel and Keitel (1990) identified poverty, acculturation, and school-related problems as the potential sources of stress for immigrant children. Other kinds of stressors have been identified by researchers as well: cultural and social conflicts, educational conflicts, and discrepancy between immigrant children's values and mainstream values (Kopala, Esquivel, & Baptiste, 1994; Wei, 1980). This section discusses how these issues are related to immigrant children in their academic, socioemotional, and career development.

Low socioeconomic status was found to be associated with health problems, low self-esteem, depression, isolation, anxiety, and academic problems for immigrant children living in poor urban areas (Kopala et al., 1994). Poverty may also limit youngsters in the pursuit of academic and occupational achievement. For instance, restricted resources do not permit immigrant children to go to quality school districts or provide immigrant children access to information about the world of professional work. Without the necessary support system, the immigrant children of lower socioeconomic status may experience hardships to live a life of their choice. Although there are some recently arrived immigrants who are well educated and in good financial conditions, there are many immigrants struggling for basic survival, especially those coming from war-torn homelands or coming as refugees. This is exactly why many immigrants are willing to sacrifice everything for their children to receive education, because education is perceived as the only way to lead to better life and employment.

Acculturative process varies at different rates for immigrant children. Age, language proficiency, educational background of both parents and children, previous contact with the host culture, and cultural familiarity could have an impact on acculturation (Kopala et al., 1994). Parents' occupational status and reasons for migration may also be potential attributes to variation of acculturation levels. Kopala et al. argued that parents who immigrated for economic or educational reasons acculturate easier than those who are forced to leave their homelands because of political upheavals. Mitigating variables, as Kopala et al. summarized, are manifested in many school children's poor coping skills, loss of friends, severance of extended family ties, anxiety about separation, unfamiliarity of the new situation, and unavailability of adequate support system. As a result, immigrant children may become withdrawn or aggressive. The previous section discussed how different levels of acculturation between parents and children could affect their relationship. In fact, the differences among immigrant children themselves could influence their adjustment to the various aspects of school life.

Although it is not clear whether language skills accelerate the acculturation process or whether the acculturated status makes language development easier, language skills and acculturation are closely related. For native-born minorities in the United States, language may not be crucial for their interaction with the mainstream culture, because English is after all one of their native languages, if not the only one.

For nonnative-born immigrants, language mastery becomes crucial because otherwise they cannot manage their daily lives. Age at immigration is particularly critical for language development. The younger the immigrant, the more likely the immigrant would speak the adopted language as native speakers. English proficiency has a direct effect on children's school achievement (Wei, 1980). On the basis of his extensive work with Vietnamese refugee students, Wei (1980) noticed that some "brilliant scholar" students in their homeland became "pathetic near flunk" students when they first enter into the American educational system because of the lack of language proficiency. It is common to see many immigrant children excel in mathematics but be just average students in English and social science. In other words, immigrant students seem to be at a disadvantage if more language skill is required in learning. This language barrier actually extends to occupational choices too. For example, Asian Americans are overrepresented in technically oriented occupations (less language skills demanded) and underrepresented in social services types of occupations (more language skills demanded).

As discussed above, acculturation and language skills are closely related. Many researches have found that acculturation is an important factor in minority members' career development (Leong & Brown, 1995; Leong & Tata, 1990; Tang, Fouad, & Smith, 1999). Leong and Chou (1994) argued that acculturation plays a critical role in understanding Asian American occupational pursuits: Less-acculturated individuals might be more susceptible to occupational stereotyping and discrimination and thus restricted from certain occupations. For immigrant children, vocational issues are interwoven with their educational processes and family obligations. They have to satisfy the expectations of their families to advance in socioeconomic status and to be financially supportive to the family. Family obligation is prominent. At the same time, as they become more acculturated, they probably have a desire to pursue a career of their true interest. Issues arise when these children may not necessarily have the available resources to help them make a realistic choice that satisfies both their familial needs and their own needs

Children in later elementary school years start to look for an identity (Erikson, 1968). They want to know who they are and where they belong. For immigrant children, this process is very difficult, because as discussed earlier, they experience the normal developmental process of transition from early childhood to preadolescence simultaneously with cultural transition from a familiar culture in their homelands to a new unfamiliar cultural environment. While they are searching their self-identity, they are seeking cultural identity at the same time. Or their self-identity and cultural identity are intertwined at the same time. The same immigrant child can be viewed by his or her schoolmates as someone different because of the child's appearance or accent or simply the child's immigrant status but be viewed by his or her parents as an Americanized alien because of the child's adoption of some American behaviors. This child is of course lost in finding a sense of belonging. Most immigrant children feel very confused about who they actually are. Their parents want them to maintain the cultural heritage, but they are overwhelmed by the world outside of home. The challenges also come from different cultural values often found between the immigrant children's original culture and host culture. For instance, assertiveness is not held in high esteem in many non-Western cultures but is valued in the dominant American culture. Strong family responsibility and connectedness are preserved for Asian and Hispanic traditional culture; however, independence and autonomy are more important in Western culture. Conflicts also exist in the immigrant parents' and children's views about dating, discipline, and certain holidays (Yao, 1989). Yao (1985) argued that extrinsic cultural traits are changed more quickly than intrinsic traits for immigrant children. For example, immigrant children acquire the taste of Western food and adopt the dressing of the dominant culture probably quicker than their parents. However, value systems, religious beliefs, and social norms are much more difficult to be changed (Yao, 1985).

CHALLENGES FOR SCHOOL COUNSELORS WORKING WITH IMMIGRANT CHILDREN

The school setting is the context in which most immigrant children would spend their day time. It is the place where they learn not only academic knowledge but also social skills and career-related information. Schools seem to be the most important environment for immigrant children to have their direct encounter with the mainstream culture. Whether schools have an available support system to help immigrant children to adjust to the transitional needs in various aspects directly affects their adjustment to the new environment. A lack of acceptance by teachers or peers would make them feel they are different and have no sense of belonging (Kopala et al., 1994). School counselors have the responsibility of helping schools to build an inviting and supportive community for immigrant children, or in fact, for every member in the school. Because of the different backgrounds they bring along, the presence of immigrant children in schools holds promises as well as challenges for school counselors.

One issue is the inadequate educational policies pertaining to the education of immigrant children (Kim, 1983). Some of the programs targeted for immigrant students are basically a language enhancement program that is necessary but not sufficient. From the previous discussion, it is clear that immigrant children experience much more complex difficulties in adjusting to the dominant U.S. culture rather than just language development. Even so, there is limited availability of qualified bilingual/bicultural teachers and staff members (Kim, 1983). Invisibility is another related issue: Some immigrant children come from a heritage that values modesty and inhibiting behaviors. The withdrawn and quiet manner misleads teachers to believe that they need no help. This faulty assumption further reinforces the restricted policies and resources for helping immigrant children.

Similarly, stereotype-inspired expectations (Kim, 1983) of school personnel exacerbate the transitional difficulties experienced by immigrant children. Teachers would expect "typical" behaviors from immigrant students that fall into their perceived image of students' particular ethnic backgrounds. By doing so, teachers overlook the individuality of each student and may underestimate some serious problems. The literature about different ethnic groups are for cultural awareness but not for stereotyping (Esquivel, 1998). Indeed, every person deserves recognition of and respect for his or her individual differences and commonalities; information about cultural diversity should enrich and enhance people's understanding of the issue rather than confine cognitive functions.

Student–teacher relationship as well as parents' relationship with schools needs to be carefully understood and maintained. In many cultures, teachers are held in very high status and are treated almost like another parent (e.g., an educational parent; Kopala et al., 1994) for students. It is often a cultural shock for some immigrant students to see the arrangement of classroom settings and the informality and friendliness of teachers in U.S. schools. Because of the authority of teachers perceived by most immigrant parents, there is a need for teachers and school counselors to be prudent in choosing the words used to describe the problem of immigrant children in conversation with parents, since even the most casual words may be taken seriously by parents (Stewart, 1993). A case was reported in which a Chinese boy was sent home to China because of disgrace when the teacher told his parents that he interrupted teachers in the class. This example may be extreme, but it illustrates how profound the teachers' relationship with students and parents can be for some immigrants.

Another challenge comes from the intragroup differences among ethnic groups. Within the same ethnic group, immigrant and native-born children do not necessarily have the common understanding of the values and beliefs (Pang, 1990). Sometimes, the two groups do not even get along very well because of various differences. The native-born ethnic minority children who are more familiar with mainstream culture and can speak fluent English do not want to be identified as or with the immigrant children for fear that they would be associated with the newcomers as "boat people." Even among immigrant children themselves, the differences of length of residence could be an important factor for variation of adjustment. Again, school counselors need to be mindful that each individual is unique.

Immigrant children's prior schooling experiences are different from what is offered in the American educational system. The instructional styles might be different as well. Teachers in the classroom might not be prepared to work with immigrant children because of overload or lack of training. Teachers might expect school counselors to help them deal with discrepancies in learning styles, sociopersonal skills, and cultural conflicts. Peer students are also in need of learning how to treat newcomers and people from different backgrounds. The challenges and tasks for school counselors can easily become overwhelming. The following section discusses how school counselors can effectively work to facilitate smooth transition for immigrant children and for entire schools.

WHAT SCHOOL COUNSELORS CAN DO TO HELP IMMIGRANT CHILDREN

School counselors play an important coordinating role in the endeavor to help immigrant children. School counselors cannot accomplish the task single-handedly without cooperation from other school personnel, parents, and other community members. Research has found that a high-performing school district that addresses immigrant student needs have the following characteristics: comprehensive ESL (English as a Second Language) programs; sufficient primary language materials; sheltered content classes to small language subgroups; teachers with higher, more positive morale/belief; organizational structures that facilitate teaching effectiveness; provision of social, health, and psychological services for children; and close collaboration with social agencies, police, and diverse ethnic subcommunities (Dentler & Hafner, 1997). Not surprisingly, school counselors have to take the mediating and facilitating role to make these things happen.

School counselors can provide in-service training to teachers and other school personnel to sensitize school professionals to the issues encountered by immigrant children. The cultural heritage, social custom, present realities, and adaptive strategies of various immigrant groups (Suarez-Orozco, 1991) should be incorporated in training. Teachers need to understand other cultures' attitudes toward teachers, to know how the American educational system discriminates against "others," to understand the cultural backgrounds of immigrant students, and to be aware of one's teaching methods (Kopala, et al., 1994). It is important for school counselors to work together with teachers, because the school counseling profession does not exist in many other countries and teachers are therefore the natural persons that immigrant parents and children look to for help. In most other cultures, parents hope that the teachers will be a model and an "educational parent" whom immigrant students can trust. Teachers are more than knowledge dispensers (Igoa, 1995). They can do a lot of things in classroom to make immigrant children feel understood and supported if they listen to children. Igoa (1995) suggested a cultural–academic–psychological approach to teach immigrant children, which includes building the "nest," validating children's culture, home–school connection, involving parents, making the child's desk a home, and embracing multiculturalism in classroom. The goal is to let immigrant children possess a feeling of having roots and a sense of belonging.

The school counselor can also perform the task of needs assessment. The areas that would be useful for assessing include the following: the stress sources for different immigrant groups, amount of external support, individuals' communications, coping skills, social skills, decision-making skills, and children's knowledge and ability to implement coping skills (Kopala et al., 1994). Because the family is an important context for immigrant children, it would be helpful to include family members in needs assessment (Esquivel & Keitel, 1990). School counselors can interview parents to understand the family's degree of acculturation, use of language at home, attitudes toward school, and expectations about services that are deemed useful for assisting immigrant children.

If the identified source for stress is from environmental variables, school counselors should alter the external sources of stress instead of focusing on immigrant children themselves. Kopala et al. (1994) suggested that school counselors develop programs that lead to increased awareness of biases and prejudices for teachers and other school personnel, parents, and students. They also suggested including immigrant parents who successfully acculturated as well as peer helpers in the program to promote understanding of cultural differences and similarities. Examples of the outreach program that can help to prevent feelings of isolation and improve adjustment include home visits by school counselors and school social workers, invitation of parents to visit schools, social gathering for newcomers, and school orientation programs. Churches and other community services could be consulted for offering help for immigrant families to get oriented about living styles in the community.

School counselors should also help classroom teachers to change or enrich the curriculum to improve the classroom instruction pertaining to cultural awareness. The multicultural instruction should promote understanding and tolerance of differences and diversity among all students. In addition, school counselors can help teachers determine the past school experiences of immigrant children—their academic ability, emotional maturity, and language needs—so that teachers can adapt their instructional methods.

Other programs in which school counselors can help immigrant children in the transitional process include prevention groups for improving adjustment (Edleson &

Roskin, 1985) and transitional support groups (Cardenas et al., 1993). Cardenas et al. studied the use of health centers that provide transitional support groups by immigrant students and found that immigrant students performed better than did the U.S.-born group in academic achievements and attendance. Group work is particularly useful in helping immigrant children because these children can find a commonality in a group setting that they usually do not have in other settings (Berger, 1996). A career intervention program will also help students to understand better the relationship of learning and work (Bachay & Rigby, 1997); ultimately, immigrant children will enter into the workforce.

While working with immigrant children on an individual level, school counselors also need to monitor their counseling skills to be culturally sensitive and appropriate. Credibility is crucial in the counselor's initial encounter with immigrant children (Sue & Zane, 1987), because most of these groups have never used helping services. If counselors do not have the adequate understanding and knowledge of clients, they will lose the trust from clients, and immature termination of counseling interventions may occur. Thus, school counselors should acquire the knowledge of pertinent immigrant groups, develop positive attitudes toward immigrants, and strengthen their culturally appropriate counseling skills. "Giving" (could be concrete ideas, a gift that benefits trustworthiness and anxiety reduction) is suggested by Sue and Zane for counselors working with minority group members.

Last, but certainly not least, school counselors should not forget their advocacy roles for every child in the school and for their profession. It is only in schools that children can seek help on their academic, personal/social, and career concerns on their own will. School counselors play a vital role in facilitating students' development in these three domains, and school counseling should be an integral part of the total educational process (American School Counselor Association, 1998). As discussed in this chapter, there are many issues and challenges facing immigrant children in school settings. School counselors should coordinate with other professionals to advocate for the needed services to help immigrant children and take a lead to facilitate healthy transition and growth for these children.

SUMMARY

Immigrant children, representing various cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic, and religious backgrounds, have their distinctive difficulties in schools and families. Because of their unique experiences in both developmental and cultural transition, immigrant children present challenges for school counselors in the new millennium. To effectively accomplish their work, school counselors need to be aware of the particular characteristics and issues related to immigrant children and facilitate a more accommodating learning environment by working together with school personnel, parents, and community members.

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Chapter 18

SPIRITUALITY: ITS PLACE IN COUNSELING CHILDREN

Mary Finn Maples

BUDDHA ONCE WROTE: "JUST AS A candle cannot burn without a fire, men cannot live without a spiritual life. The spirit dwells in all men, but not all men are aware of this. Happy is the life of him who knows this" (Osman & Russell, 1979, p. 359).

"The human needs a framework of values, a philosophy of life, a sense of spirituality . . . to live by and understand by, in about the same sense as he needs sunlight, calcium and love" (Maslow, 1968, p. xx). Maslow was convinced that the value-life, seen also as spiritual life, was to him a "species-wide" need for what he called "B" values. According to Clinebell (1995), Maslow saw these B values as "truth, beauty, wholeness, justice, playfulness, meaningfulness" (p. 92). According to Maslow (1971), there is an "epidemic of spiritual illnesses, (metapathologies) resulting from deprivation of these values, resulting in anomie, alienation, loss of zest for life, hopelessness, boredom, and depression" (p. 325). Clinebell (1995) further stated that "spiritual growth is the key to all human growth" (p. 89). The very term *growth* implies the need to attend to this topic and concern as early as possible in life. From a counseling perspective, this is clearly the responsibility of those working with children in the elementary school. J. Coles (1997a, p. 167), discussing some of the questions that parents ask themselves when thinking of their children's futures, suggested these as examples: "Will they be healthy, pretty, handsome, smart, responsible about sex, get into a good college?" However, in exploring the development of kindness in children in a 1997 *Time* magazine article, J. Coles (1997b) stated that the parents' overriding questions are, "Will they be good? Will they be children of light or children of darkness?" Coles expressed doubt that instilling kindness is an easy task, when one reads of "second grade boys in Salem, Oregon trying to suffocate a girl, when small Rwandan children without shoes carry their own AK-47s, when the raunchy 'Beavis and Butt-Head Do America' is the surprise hit of the season" (J. Coles, 1997b, p. 50).

This chapter explores definitions of spirituality, the literature that views spirituality in the developmental context of holism and wellness, contemporary views of children about spirituality, and implementation models and strategies for counselors who work with children in elementary school.

RATIONALE

Although there has been increasing interest, research, and conjecture on spirituality in recent literature worldwide (Aspy & Aspy, 1993; Bolton, 1997; Clinebell, 1995; J. Coles, 1997a; Daniels, 1994; Hackney, 1996), very little was found related to either children's spirituality or the infusion of spirituality in counseling children. The lack of literature on this topic is ironic when one considers that the majority of the authors viewed spirituality as a "developmental" process. Does human development not begin at birth?

Furthermore, so many authors viewed *spirituality* in a variety of contexts, such as *values, morality, attitudes, ethics, philosophy,* and, of course, *religion,* that it was noteworthy that they were all talking about spirituality. It appeared more simplistic for some to write of *spiritual well-being* or *spiritual wellness* or *spirituality and religion* so as to legitimize the term *spirituality* (Hill, 2000; Seaward, 1991; Wylie, 1996). Therefore, if one considers human development to begin at birth, then it is important, if not crucial, for elementary school counselors to be informed regarding this importance and to be aware of their views about their own personal spirituality to develop the competence to infuse spirituality into their counseling practice with children in elementary school settings.

Nonreligious "spirituality," which *Webster*'s 1998 dictionary (p. 1293) defined as "breath of life" and which I defined as "personhood" (Maples, 1995), should be acceptable to all educators and institutions supported by public funds. However, schools endorsed by private, religiously oriented organizations may equate spirituality as defined by a specific religion. This chapter addresses spirituality in a holistic nonreligious manner, though a variety of definitions are explored, such as that suggested by Wylie (1996, p. 101) when he described wellness as "balancing the physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual health components within a person's being." Some, including Chandler, Holden, and Kolander (1992) and Witmer and Sweeney (1992), have asserted the "spiritual health component to be the catalyst most important for a person to achieve optimal health" (Chandler et al., 1992, p. 123). Furthermore, Maher and Hunt (1993) postulated that "spirituality is now at the very core of wellness" (p. 23).

SPIRITUALITY AS RELIGION?

Spirituality, as described within the context of elementary school counseling, is synonymous with neither religion nor religiosity, as may be concluded by some readers, nor is either implied, although religion is accepted by most researchers as a component or aspect of spirituality if chosen freely and personally by individuals. Legere (1984) stated,

> Spirituality is not a religion; Spirituality has to do with experience, religion has to do with the conceptualization of that experience. Spirituality focuses on what happens to the heart; religion tries to codify and capture that experience into a system. (p. 376)

Another reason for exploring and discussing children's spirituality in a counseling context is because of the very issue of spirituality versus religion or religiosity. The historical context of the separation of church and state clauses in the U.S. Constitution has caused educators for centuries and school counselors, by implication, to avoid the mention of spiritual or spirituality in a school setting, even when devoid of religious connotation. In a sense, they have not known how to address the concept.

According to Hill (2000), the split between spirituality and religiosity is recent. She stated that the two words have different meanings for different people. For example, Zinnbauer et al. (1997) and his colleagues found that among 11 different groups (ranging from New Age groups and mental health workers to Roman Catholics), 9 groups rated themselves as higher in spirituality than in religiosity. Perhaps the simplest reason for exploring spirituality in children comes from Fox (1990), who described spirituality as knowledge of one's heart, and I see children as the core of the human heart.

SPIRITUALITY DEFINED

In my holistic human development model, I defined *spirit* simply as "breath of life; core of life's existence, personhood; source of life's energy" (Maples, 1995, p. 2). I see *spirituality* as "the dynamic flow of life's energy into daily existence, permeating consciously or unconsciously every activity" (Maples, 1995, p. 7), and I describe the goal of spiritual development as "to free the human spirit through the empowering of faith, hope and love, both dynamically, in action and statically, at rest" (p. 8).

Blakeney and Blakeney (1992) quoted Oxford dictionary as defining the *psyche* first as the "soul" and only secondarily as the "mind" (p. 39). Malony (1998) skirted the term *spirituality* when addressing the issue in his essay, "Counseling Body/Soul Persons," to an international readership. Perhaps avoidance of the term *spirituality* was an attempt at political correctness, yet Malony (1998) identified *soulness* as spirituality in speaking of "those upper-middle-class successful citizens who seek therapy (counseling) because they have the leisure to become more spiritual" (p. 236). Reinforcing the need for defining (or redefining) spirituality is suggested by Maher and Hunt (1993):

> Conventional wisdom suggests that to use spirituality as a vital component in the art of counseling, it must first be clearly defined. Counseling professionals have attempted to address that reality since spirituality was initially recognized as a therapeutic factor in the helping arts. (p. 21)

Maher and Hunt (1993) cited works by Jung (1933, 1934) and Maslow (1968, 1971). "Because the very thought or idea of spirituality is value-laden, as well as culturally, religiously and ethnically bound, any meaningful investigation might be considered an exercise in futility" (Maslow, 1971, p. 22).

A further argument for the emergence of spirituality in counseling children is the fact that the 1994 edition of the Standards for the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) made no mention of spirituality in counseling. Yet, the newly adopted Standards manual for CACREP (2001) addresses spirituality many times. CACREP (2001) defined *spirituality* as "the inner life of the individual that is part of the (wholeness) of a person. Spirituality is often considered a motivating force for an individual's actions and thought processes and, therefore, may be an appropriate aspect of counseling" (p. 57). Porter (1998) quoted *Merriam Webster's* (1998) definition of *spirit* as "associated with air or the breath" (p. 1293).

DISTINCTION BETWEEN RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY

According to Kelly (1995),

> an appreciation of the roles of religion and spirituality in counseling begins with a twofold challenge: to achieve reasonable clarity in organizing the many different meanings that people attach to the terms, religion and spirituality, and to understand the importance that religion and spirituality carry for many people. (p. 1)

In an effort to clearly define spirituality, Shafranske and Gorsuch (1984) offered the following definition: "Spirituality is the courage to look within and trust. What is seen and trusted appears to be a deep sense of belonging, of wholeness, of connectedness, and [of] openness to the infinite" (p. 233). Furthermore, Elkins, Hedstrom, Hughes, Leaf, and Saunders (1998) viewed spirituality as

> coming from spirits meaning "breath of life", and as a way of being and experiencing that comes about through awareness of a transcendent dimension and that is characterized by certain identifiable values in regard to self, others, nature, life and whatever one considers to be the ultimate. (p. 10)

Kelly's (1995) view of spirituality (different from religion) seems to suggest a reason for exploring spirituality in counseling elementary school children:

> Identifiable values of spirituality include confidence in the meaning and purpose of life, a sense of mission and of the sacredness of life, a balanced appreciation of material values, an altruistic attitude towards others, a vision for the betterment of the world and a serious awareness of the tragic side of life. (p. 4)

This quote could be a preamble to my later section, Children's Views of Spirituality. Hinterkopf (1998) wrote of a need for a process definition of spirituality. She proposed the following: "Spirituality (or the spiritual experience) is a subtle, bodily feeling with vague meanings that brings new, clearer meanings involving a transcendent growth process" (p. 11).

SPIRITUALITY DESCRIBED

In 1995, the first of several Summits on Spirituality was sponsored by the Association for Spiritual, Ethical and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC). The major goal of this meeting was to reach a consensus on a definition of spirituality. After 3 days, it became clear that, despite the many definitions offered by writers over many years, the term defied definition. The 12 specialists in the infusion of spirituality in counselor education agreed that a *description* of spirituality was more appropriate. The following description of spirituality drives the remainder of the chapter, in my assessment of counseling elementary school children for spiritual development.

> Spirituality is described as a capacity and a tendency that is innate and unique to all persons. The spiritual tendency moves the individual toward knowledge, love, meaning, transcendence, connectedness, and compassion. Spirituality includes one's capacity for growth, creativity and development and/or enhancement of a value system. Spirituality encompasses the spiritual, religious and/or transpersonal, depending upon the person in the process.
>
> The experience and expression of spirituality is/may be influenced by individual culture and universal elements. These elements are guided by factors which include: age; gender; sexual orientation; socio-economic status; race; ethnicity; abilities and disabilities. (Summit on Spirituality, 1995)

A valuable contribution of this description is its emphasis on holism and wellness. Researchers and writers in recent years have concentrated on these two facets of spirituality. Ingersoll (1998) stressed that "spiritual wellness is a reflection of spiritual health" (p. 156). In describing spiritual wellness or spiritual well-being, Moberg and Brusak (1978) identified dimensions such as faith and belief in a divinity, meaning in life, faith in other people, and harmony with oneself. In conducting research to redefine the 10 dimensions of spiritual wellness, Ingersoll (1994) interviewed 12 carefully selected panelists who represented 11 different spiritual traditions. Each had practiced his or her tradition for the past 10 years and held leadership positions within these traditions.

The panelists were asked to rate the dimensions of spiritual wellness in rank order. Their ratings on a scale of 1–7 (ranging from 1 = *lowest* to 7 = *highest*) are listed in Table 18.1.

Because spiritual wellness and spiritual well-being are considered multidimensional (Moberg, 1984), the qualitative results of this study support this notion.

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDREN

Before children's views of spirituality are examined, it is important to review some of the writings of adults about children's spirituality. Little attention has been given to children's spirituality. In an article about children in foster care, Weaver (1999), discussing early spirituality in children, stated:

> Very young children have little or no verbal expression to communicate their spiritual selves; their earliest developmental task is the connection of their spiritual being

Table 18.1 Panelists Ratings of Revised Dimensions of Spiritual Wellness

Dimension	Mean Rating
Knowledge–Learning	6.6
Conception of the Absolute or Divine	6.5
Connectedness	6.5
Meaning	6.2
Forgiveness	6.2
Hope	5.9
Experience–Ritual	5.7
Present–Centeredness	5.6
Sense of Freedom	5.5
Mystery	5.4

> to the spiritual being of their caregiver. . . . Observing and understanding the spirituality of young children before they receive any formal religious education can highlight the distinction between spiritual and religious life. (Weaver, 1999, p. 141)

Because she was writing about children in foster care, the majority of whom are placed under 5 years of age, Weaver focused her study in this age area. Robert Coles was instrumental in providing considerable data in his seminal work, *The Spiritual Life of Children* (1990). In Cole's interview with Dorothy Day about her spiritual life, Day shared that her own spiritual pilgrimage did not begin when she converted to the Catholic Church as an adult, but began when she was 7 years old, clarifying that spiritual questions (as will be seen later in the following children's survey) do not have to be asked in religious language. Reinhold Niebuhr (cited by R. Coles, 1990) also made the distinction between the religious and the spiritual, commenting that

> the religious tradition can successfully stifle a good deal of valuable and suggestive spiritual introspection . . . wondering out loud whether spirituality doesn't best renew stuff in the most surprising ways at the hands (implication children) of those who may not lay claim to any interest in religion or spiritual speculation. (p. 278)

Detweiler (1978, p. 1), a Mennonite educator, wrote of the spiritual development of children in "ages":

> Birth to 5 years—the age of innocence
> Children from 6 to 11 years—the age of awareness
> Children from 12 to 18 years—the age of awakening.

CHILDREN'S VIEWS OF SPIRITUALITY

Before discussing spirituality as an aspect of counseling children, I believe it is important to explore children's views about spirituality. Because R. Coles (1990), Detweiler (1978), and Weaver (1999) all wrote about younger children, I conducted a survey of two fifth-grade classes (50 children) and three sixth-grade classes (70 children) for a total of 120 students.

These children averaged 11.3 (fifth grade) and 12.4 (sixth grade) years of age. They attend school in a middle-class neighborhood in northern Nevada. The children are somewhat culturally diverse, about 10% non-Caucasian, similar to the general population in their locale.

The Survey

Instructions given to the children were very simple. They were told that they were free not to participate, to remain in the classroom, or go to the library (no child refused to take the survey). A disclaimer was given, using the exact words: "You do not need to consider spirituality as meaning religion, if you choose not to."

Results (A Brief Sample)

1. *What is your definition of spirituality?*

Sixth-grade responses included the following:

> "Spirituality means to me that you should do what your inner spirit tells you to do."
> "The way you treat yourself and have connections with yourself."
> "Spirituality is something inside you, cannot feel by touch but what you believe."
> "The way you see the world, the way you see others, and the way you see yourself."

> "My definition of spirituality is believing in yourself and participating in as much stuff as you can."
> "What you believe in, meaning God, Jesus, Buda [*sic*]."
> "I really don't know what it means, something to do with God."
> "I'm not sure what this word means. I have never heard it before."

Fifth-grade responses included the following:

> "My definition of spirituality is the freedom to choose who you want to worship."
> "My definition of spirituality is having a positive attitude."
> "I think spirituality means you pray and have a peaceful feeling inside you."
> "Never give up, don't get down on yourself."
> "My own definition of spirituality is a ghost or energy."

The main focus in these responses, for both fifth and sixth graders, were "a higher power," "connectedness," and "a positive attitude." Approximately 5% of sixth graders and 10% of fifth graders indicated that they did not know what spirituality was.

Space limits the opportunity to share other questions and their responses, so I extrapolate some responses below.

2. *If you see "spirituality" as part of your life, how do you see it?*

The main emphases for both grades were "When my family prays," "When people tell me I have a kind heart," "not fighting," "in almost everything, especially friendship." And, from a very thoughtful child: "If I walk 5 people in a baseball game and don't get down on myself."

3. *Should "spirituality" be a part of a sixth (fifth) grader's life? If so, how might it be introduced and discussed?*

In general, responses were positive but qualified by "If the teacher feels like discussing it" and "I think spirituality belongs at home and in Church." Another thoughtful response: "Yes, without God we wouldn't be here."

4. *Should "spirituality" be discussed in school at all grades?*

In general, responses were in the affirmative, answering that "this is how we will learn what spirituality really is":

> "Yes, 'cause it helps us understand and grow."
> "Yes, because some kids need to learn what it is, so you can have feelings and thoughts about it."
> "Yes, because it is very good in education to learn about it."
> "I don't think spirituality should be discussed in school because there are kids with different religions."
> "No, because someone might make fun of you."

From this sample of children's responses to spirituality, an exploration of children's spiritual development was conducted.

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDREN

Developmental Models

Jean Piaget (1932, 1965) wrote of changes in levels of moral reasoning in children to accompany changes in their levels of cognitive development. He posited that "children do not possess the knowledge necessary to become truly moral persons . . . until they enter the concrete operational period sometime around age seven" (Piaget, as quoted in Maples, 1996, p. 48). If one could equate moral development with some sense of spiritual development, it might simplify the spirituality issue in school systems. Clouse (1978) expanded on Piaget's cognitive development schema and proposed six concepts related to spiritual or moral development: (a) belief that intentional acts are thought to be of a higher order than unintentional acts, (b) recognition of divergent sets of values, (c) the belief that moral behavior is defined as moral whether or not punishment is expected, (d) belief that repaying evil with evil and good with good is less advanced than doing good regardless of the merit attached, (e) that it is better to see transgressors rehabilitated than punished, and (f) the belief that misfortune is not always the result of immoral behavior. Clouse's concepts are shared because they are consonant with the children's survey responses discussed earlier in this chapter.

Fowler (1981) proposed a developmental model that he configured as stages of faith. According to Fowler, faith (some children equate this with spirituality) develops in six invariant stages that occur in fixed and often predictable order and represent successively more complex ways of organizing meaning in a person's life. Although Fowler's schema, which Piaget called concrete operational thinking, may be developmental and progressive, it does not necessarily correspond to age. The following are Fowler's six stages:

Stage 0: Undifferentiated Faith. Fowler sees this stage as prelinguistic. The infant has a sense of trust, hope, and love. The transition to Stage 1 begins with the development of language.

Stage 1: Intuitive–Projective Faith (Spirituality). This stage includes images of parents' belief systems or religion (if such exists). It includes family rituals, stories, anecdotes, and stimuli that impress the child. The transition to the next stage is what Piaget called concrete operational thinking and generally occurs between ages 7 and 11.

Stage 2: Mythic Literal Faith (Spirituality). This stage is characterized by the child's attempts to attach some order or meaning to the stories, beliefs, rules, and attitudes in his or her environment. According to Fowler, some persons remain in this stage throughout their lives. Transition to the next (and, under most circumstances, the last for elementary school children) is stimulated by Piaget's (1932/1965) theory of formal operational thinking.

Stage 3: Synthetic–Conventional Faith. This stage gives meaning and coherence to family, school, peers, media, and often to formal religious orientations and environments. The child or adolescent begins to question adult spirituality, customs, rules, and values in an effort to determine his or her own belief system, meaning in life, or spiritual wellness.

The remaining stages in Fowler's (1981) system—*Stage 4: Individuative–Reflective; Stage 5: Paradoxical–Consolidative,* and *Stage 6: Universal Faith*—while completing the holistic approach to spiritual well-being, do not have a significant impact on the development of elementary school children. Fowler's stages also appear to reinforce Kelly's (1995) view of spirituality as "signifying the connectedness, meaningfulness, and ultimate existentiality of all reality as well as the capacity for living consciousness of that reality" (p. 13).

SPIRITUALITY AND COUNSELOR EDUCATION

Chandler et al. (1992) stated that "any behavior change in counseling that is not accompanied by spiritual development may be especially vulnerable to recidivism" (p. 171). It appears that effective counselor education programs, present and future, should incorporate spirituality, spiritual wellness, spiritual well-being, or spiritual development within the scope of training. Hackney (1996) reinforced this concept when he suggested ways of infusing spirituality into the counselor education curriculum.

According to Mack (1994), the counseling profession must establish two preconditions for training and practice: (a) a strong awareness of the delineations between religiosity and spirituality and (b) broad theoretical grounds for inclusion of spirituality in counseling practice. Mack (1994) further cautioned that the lack of attention to spirituality in the study of psychology and counseling "may be rooted in the profession's historical precedents to dissociate itself from non-empirical philosophical disciplines" (p. 15).

One of the most attractive features of counselor education students to the works of Carl Jung appears to be his focus on what he described as a "natural" spirituality (Jung, 1933), which he considered a base for the human development of both Christianity and alternative spiritualities (Benner, 1989). Jung's charge that spiritual growth is one of individuation also constitutes a precondition in counselor education (Corsini & Wedding, 1989).

If historian Jan Ehrenwald (1966) was accurate in his perception that "psychotherapy arose in an effort to fill the spiritual void left by the demise of religion, its goal being to meet 'unmet metaphysical needs'" (p. 16), then why has spirituality not been included since the inception of counselor education? Perhaps difficulty to concisely define or describe spirituality (as is evident from the children's simple responses listed earlier) particularly as it relates to counseling in the elementary school was too profound a challenge.

From the "preconditions" to infusing spirituality into counselor education curricula, the works of Jung (1933, 1934) and later of Victor Frankl (1946), who wrote of human concerns of the spirit and his introduction of "logotherapy" (Frankl, 1984) in which he theorized that striving to find meaning in life is the primary motivational force in man, appear to advocate strongly for spirituality in counseling.

SPIRITUALITY COUNSELING COMPETENCIES

Many counselor education programs are developing curricula built on competencies. Following is a set of Counselor Competencies for Infusing Spirituality into Counselor Education Curriculum (Kelly et al., 1997):

DRAFT OF SPIRITUALITY COMPETENCIES

I. Believing that a general understanding of religious, spiritual, and transpersonal (r/s/t) phenomena (experiences, beliefs, practices) is important to the counseling process, the professional counselor can:
    A. Discuss possible relationships between r/s/t phenomena, including similarities and differences among the three types of phenomena.
    B. Describe r/s/t phenomena from the perspective of diversity.

   C. Explain one or two models of human r/s/t development across the life span. (Chandler et al., 1992; Fowler, 1981; Maslow, 1971; Sweeney & Wittmer, 1994)
   D. Describe research, theory, and clinical evidence that indicates the relationships between r/s/t phenomena on the one hand and mental health on the other.

II. Believing that awareness of one's own r/s/t belief system is important to the counseling process, the professional counselor can:
   A. Describe one's r/s/t belief system.
   B. Identify key events in one's life that contributed to the development of one's own r/s/t belief system and explain how those events contributed.
   C. Identify specific attitudes, beliefs, and values from one's own r/s/t belief system both that support and that impede or hinder respect and valuing of different r/s/t belief systems.
   D. Actively engage in an ongoing process of challenging one's own attitudes and beliefs that do not support respecting and valuing of different r/s/t belief systems.
   E. Describe the extent to which one's own r/s/t belief system is held in relative favor or disfavor by individuals subscribing to other r/s/t belief systems.
   F. Develop appropriate responses to criticism of one's own r/s/t belief system.
   G. Conceptualize oneself from the perspective of at least two models of human r/s/t development across the life span.
   H. Conceptualize oneself in terms of research, theory, and clinical evidence that indicate the relationships between r/s/t phenomena and mental wellness.
   I. Identify limits to one's tolerance of religious, spiritual, and/or transpersonal phenomena that differs from one's own r/s/t belief system.

III. Believing that an understanding of the client's r/s/t world view is important to the counseling process, the professional counselor can:
   A. Demonstrate openness to, empathy with, and an acceptance of a variety of r/s/t phenomena.
   B. Describe the role of the client's r/s/t world view in an understanding of the client as a whole.
   C. Engage in the acquisition of knowledge needed to better understand a client's r/s/t world view by requesting information from the clients themselves and/or acquiring it through outside resources.
   D. Use r/s/t terms and concepts that are meaningful to the client.
   E. Identify when one's understanding and/or tolerance of the client's r/s/t world view is insufficient to adequately serve the client.

IV. Believing that appropriate intervention strategies and techniques are important to the counseling process, the professional counselor can:
   A. Assess the relevance of the r/s/t domain in a client's therapeutic issues.
   B. Use a client's r/s/t phenomena in pursuit of the client's therapeutic goals as befits the client's expressed preferences.
   C. When relevant to the client's therapeutic issues and preferences, conceptualize the client:
      1. From the perspective of at least two models of human r/s/t development across the life span.

   2. In terms of research, theory, and clinical evidence that indicates the relationships between r/s/t phenomena and mental wellness.

D. Demonstrate competent use of techniques for remediation of problems with psychological integration of, facilitation of, and enhancement of r/s/t phenomena.

E. Consult with r/s/t professionals including those to whom a client looks as a r/s/t authority when such consultation would significantly enhance service to the client.

F. Having identified limits to one's tolerance and competence,
   1. Seek consultation
   2. Seek further training or education
   3. Demonstrate appropriate referral skills, or
   4. Engage in a combination of 1–3 above. (Kelly et al., 1997)

These competencies were designed to be global and all-encompassing. They should be adapted to the needs of elementary school children.

SPIRITUALITY COUNSELING COURSEWORK

Infusing spirituality into elementary school counselor training, as with many counseling preparation approaches, often begins with new models or adaptations of models. Seaward (1991) suggested a spiritual well-being model that appears to be most adaptable to elementary school children (see Figure 18.1).

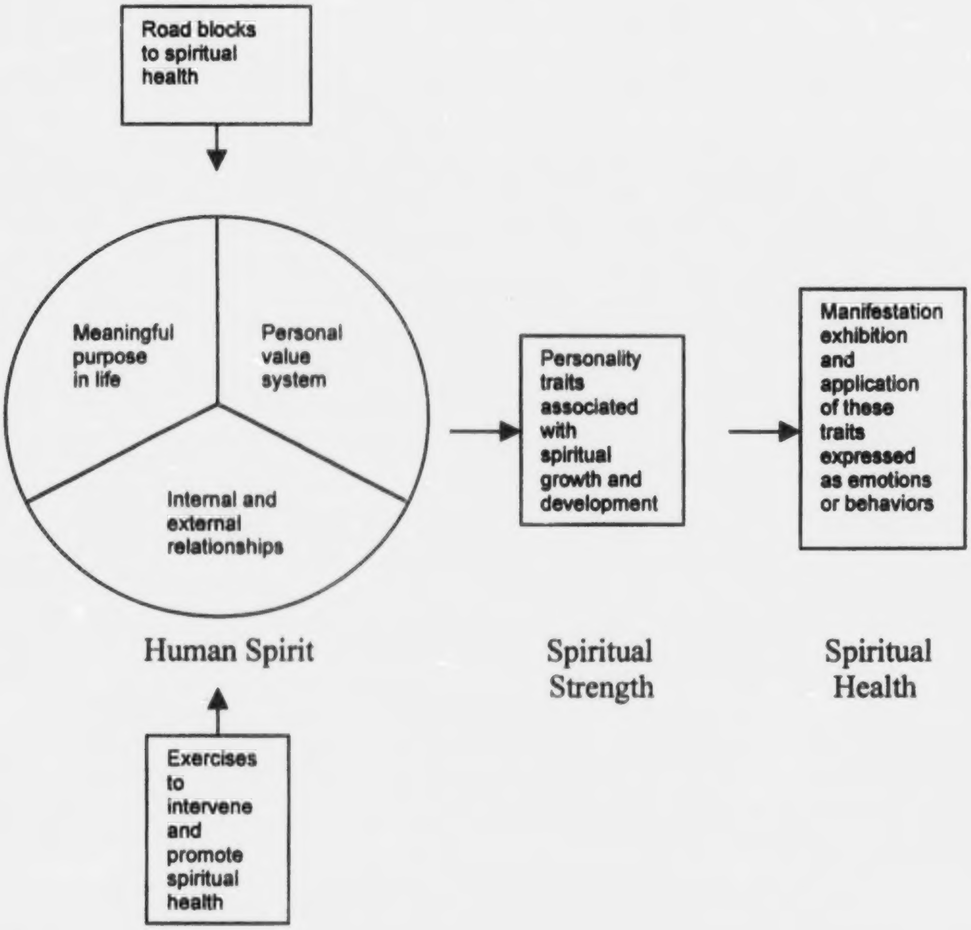
This model is anchored by three facets of the human spirit, identified earlier by the surveys of fifth and sixth graders: meaningful purpose, personal values, and internal and external relationships. These, according to Seaward (1991), influence spiritual health (expression of these traits). No part of this model would be associated with religion, unless the client (child) chose to incorporate religion.

Ingersoll (1997) described a specific course on Counseling and Spirituality. In this course, he detailed (a) Goals, (b) General Considerations, (c) Course Assignments, and (d) Curriculum, delineated into five parts: 1. Getting Started, 2. Receptivity and Activity, 3. Spirituality and Suffering, 4. Can a Spiritual Path Be Healthy or Unhealthy? and 5. Experiential Integration. Ingersoll concluded that feedback indicated that students felt validated by the approach that allows spirituality without demanding religious involvement.

Fukayama and Sevig (1997) proposed a course titled "Spiritual Issues in Counseling." They defined spirituality, borrowing from Clinebell (1995), as "an individual's search for meaning in life and relationship with a transcendent power" (p. 267). In addition to the rationale and objectives, Fukayama and Sevig emphasized counselor self-awareness, spiritual issues in counseling, ethical concerns, dysfunctional religious beliefs, knowing one's comfort zones and limitations, unhealthy family systems that affect client spirituality, and counselor religious beliefs that may conflict with those of the client. Again, as in Ingersoll's (1997) course on counseling and spirituality, feedback was generally positive. The consistency between graduate-student classroom atmosphere and that of counseling for children's spirituality was that there be a safe environment in which to talk freely.

Wylie (1996) suggested a process to incorporate spirituality into a "health and wellness model." This model could also be adapted for counselors working with ele-

Figure 18.1 Spiritual well-being model


Road blocks to spiritual health
Meaningful purpose in life
Personal value system
Internal and external relationships
Human Spirit
Personality traits associated with spiritual growth and development
Spiritual Strength
Manifestation exhibition and application of these traits expressed as emotions or behaviors
Spiritual Health
Exercises to intervene and promote spiritual health

mentary school children. The steps include (adapted for counseling children) the following:

- Regularly assess the spiritual needs of children through data gathering (such as surveys), involving parents, as appropriate
- Develop a counseling plan of action for each child or group
- Implement, coordinate, and evaluate these spiritual counseling plans
- Regularly be available to the children with further questions and needs
- Design continuing programs for use in counseling and, as appropriate, in classroom guidance activities
- Serve as a liaison to teachers, parents, and community in helping them to understand the purpose of incorporating spirituality (not religion) into the counseling program
- Provide audio and visual materials to help the various constituents involved in the school system (school board members) understand the infusion of spirituality into the counseling program

Finally, in counseling elementary school children, counselors should be aware of, respectful of, and ready for those detractors who may not, cannot, or will not accept spirituality as an important element.

SUMMARY

This chapter explored the many facets involved in the consideration of spirituality as a component in counseling elementary school children. There is a paucity of research on the topic, although many authors believe spirituality to be valuable in the counseling process. Definitions and descriptions, while varied and disparate, were explored. Distinctions between religion and spirituality were discussed. Children's views on their own spirituality and its place in school were shared. Models of spiritual development and spiritual well-being, as well as competencies necessary for counselor education, were suggested. It is clear that spirituality is a missing but crucial component for counseling at all ages but is most necessary for elementary school children.

Sweeney and Witmer (1994), in citing spirituality as a vital aspect of one's life, defined spirituality in a manner that is appropriate for counseling in the elementary school. They wrote of spirituality as

> a quality of human life that goes beyond the physical and material aspects of existence, recognizing a force, spirit or energy which embodies the personhood of the individual. Since spirituality is a quality of our humanness, we are all engaged in a lifelong journey of some kind. (p. 5)

Finally, as I stated in Maples (1996), "Without individual spirituality, in concert with law, morality and faith, what would be the cornerstones of a civilized society?" (p. 56).

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Chapter 19

ISSUES OF DIFFERENCE: GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILD

Kathleen M. Kirby

THIS CHAPTER DISCUSSES THE DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS in children relating to gender identity. It reviews how children discover the differences between boys/men and girls/women, come to discriminate differences between gender, and develop the concept of masculinity and femininity. The chapter also explores issues of sexuality as they relate to the concepts of gender and sexual orientation. Emphasis is placed on the important role of school counselors and teachers in assisting elementary children in their development of tolerance for difference and expanding their understanding of gender issues. Suggestions for expanding information about and tolerance for the concepts of gender roles is presented, as well as the importance of reinforcing positive self-concept in elementary school-age children.

GENDER IDENTITY AND CONSTANCY

Over 40 years ago, Kohlberg (1966) introduced the concept of gender constancy. Since then, researchers have been investigating children's understanding of the concepts of male and female and how these ideas grow and change during childhood. It appears that children first develop the ability to label their own gender and the gender of others at approximately 2 to 3 years of age (Etaugh, Grinnell, & Etaugh, 1989; Fagot & Leinbach, 1989; Slaby & Frey, 1975). By the time they are 3 years old, most children are able to sort photographs on the basis of gender and accurately label themselves and others by gender (Leinbach & Fagot, 1986; Thompson, 1975; Weinraub et al., 1984)

At about age 4, children's awareness of gender identity becomes stable over time and influences their categorization of such behaviors and activities as manner of dress, interests, personality traits, careers, aptitudes, and expression into gendered categories—that of boy/man or girl/woman—throughout their lifetime. Although the sophistication of the reasons for categorization varies with age, the underlying concept of masculinity and femininity appears to vary only minimally (Bem, 1989; Emmerich, 1982). For instance, 5- to 7-year-olds tend to offer explanations for their categorization that are reflective of societal stereotypes ("Boys don't play with dolls; boys don't wear dresses; boys don't cry"), whereas 8- and 9-year-olds rely less on external cues and gender norms and place more importance on the underlying invariability of gender identity and characterize it as innate and unchanging ("No matter what he puts on, he's a boy—God made him that way and he can't change it"; Szkrybalo & Ruble, 1999).

Children seem to need to understand the permanency of their own sex or gender before they are able to understand and categorize others (Eaton & Von Bargen, 1981; Gouze & Nadelman, 1980; Wehren & De Lisi, 1983). Although young children appear to categorize and defend their classification using cultural stereotypes, they also appear to apply their judgment to the outward manifestations rather than inward or biological foundations of gender. For instance, if a picture of a person with very short hair and the body outlined without genitalia but having no clothing was shown to a 4-year-old child, the child would likely classify the person as a boy/man. If a dress were placed on that figure, the child would most likely claim that the figure was really a girl/woman all along.

GENDER SCHEMA THEORY: THE MASCULINE AND FEMININE

Martin and Halverson's (1981) gender schema theory suggests that the drive to develop personal gender constancy leads children to learn and engage in same-gender-typed toys and play activities at an early age. Subsequent research has shown that boys will engage in playing with objects that they perceive as male oriented or masculine even if those toys and activities are not personally satisfying (Frey & Ruble, 1992). Others, such as Kohlberg (1966), believe that the concept of gender identity is an important organizer of the individual's self-concept and guides self-actualization and socialization.

It has been noted that very young children behave in a gender-stereotypic way (Fagot, 1974). Researchers have found that perceptions of gender role stereotypes are aspects of the development of social conventions, and these concepts undergo developmental changes over time (Carter & Patterson, 1982; Damon, 1977; Lockhart, Abrahams, & Osherson, 1977; Turiel, 1978). At first, children are willing to accept any departure from the conventional norm of gender-appropriate behavior. Young children have no norm and thereby do not recognize that a boy playing with dolls or a girl playing with a truck, for example, is violating a norm. As children age, they first become more rigid and inflexible in their belief in gender-typed behavior during early childhood and subsequently develop more flexibility during middle childhood, seeing gendered behavior in part as arbitrary and changeable as a result of social convention. Adolescents, however, tend to revert to the rigid inflexibility of early childhood (Carter & Patterson, 1982; Stoddart & Turiel, 1985).

Kirby (in press) wrote about the "gender police" as the collective arm of society enforcing cultural stereotypes. She noted that our society is organized around concepts of gender; for example, one of the first questions asked of new parents is that of the gender or sex of the child. Some of the most compelling evidence for differences in parents' behavior toward boys and girls' comes from Block (1984), whose work reveals consistent sex-of-child differences in child rearing that begin in infancy and extend throughout childhood. These distinctions are found along a variety of dimensions and are probably related to differences in power and assertiveness observed in boys and girls. In general, fathers more than mothers pressure their children to behave in gender-appropriate ways. They set higher standards of achievement for their sons than for their daughters, although both parents tend to be more restrictive of their daughters and allow their sons more freedom and less intervention (Skolnick, 1992).

Because people learn and organize thought through stereotyping and categorization, it follows that gender stereotypes contain some element of truth that can be occasionally found or experienced. The problem arises when gender stereotypes yield culturally sanctioned enforcement of limits on behavior, particularly when this behavior is not illegal, immoral, or destructive. The unconscious use of one's gender identification patterns creates the unconscious but consistent enforcement of "correct" gender patterns in oneself and in everything that one accesses or controls. In essence, all people are the "gender police"! Some, however, have inordinate power of enforcement of their personal gender standards and sex stereotypes through their roles as parent, teacher, or media mogul. Elementary and middle school students can be found performing their gender policing duties by identifying those who do not subscribe to the ideal qualities of culturally sanctioned gender and teasing those individuals by calling them "gay," "faggot," "lesbo," "queer," or other derogatory terms meant to signify less-than-ideal gender persona.

Teachers, school counselors, and administrators are as guilty of invoking the gender police as other members of society. Although most individuals do not believe that they hold unfair or unrealistic standards of gendered behavior, for the most part, few have explored their personal gender or sex role beliefs that drive their gendered behavior. Stereotype threat is especially frustrating because, at each level of schooling, it affects boys' and girls' self-confidence, formulation of personal abilities and achievements, concept of possibilities, dreams and career goals, and personal motivation. Even those with the skills and self-confidence to achieve have identified with gender stereotypes and redirected their energies to more "socially acceptable" means of achievement. Ironically, the susceptibility to this threat derives not from internal doubts about their ability but from their identification with the gender stereotypes and issues and the resulting concern they have about being stereotyped by others.

GENDER ISSUES AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Students may underperform in areas in which they are not "supposed to" achieve. In essence, a boy and a girl in a math classroom are receiving essentially the same instruction. The teacher is the same; the textbooks are the same; and in better classrooms, these students are treated the same. Because of the internalization of gender stereotype, it is possible that they could still experience the classroom differently, so differently in fact as to significantly affect their performance and achievement.

One example of internalized negative stereotype is the fact that although girls excel in many areas of schooling, they often tolerate lesser outcomes than boys in math and sciences. This leads to disparity between women and men in math, engineering, and the physical sciences. In a meta-analysis involving over 3 million participants, Hyde, Fennema, and Lamon (1990) found that through elementary and middle school, there are virtually no differences between boys and girls in performance on standardized math tests but that a trend toward boys/men doing better steadily increases from high school through college and into adulthood. Unfortunately, women leave these fields at a rate two and a half times that of men (Hewitt & Seymour, 1991). Hewitt and Seymour noted that although women constitute approximately 51% of the U.S. population, they earn only 22% of the Bachelor of Science degrees, 13% of the PhDs, and occupy only 10% of the jobs in physical science, math, and engineering, where they earn only 75% of the salary paid to men.

There are many venues within the elementary school in which girls excel. Kindlon and Thompson (1999) wrote, in their book, *Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys*, that grade school is largely a feminine environment primarily populated by women teachers and authority figures. They noted that this environment appears to be hostile to the normal persona of boys in the declaration against high activity and eschewing of those who lack impulse control. Kindlon and Thompson quoted one very disappointed first-grade boy, who exclaimed, "You can't do anything!" referring to the prohibition against running, jumping, throwing, wrestling, climbing, and generally moving around. They also quoted David Trower, headmaster of the all-boy Allen Stevenson School in New York City: "If boys need the protection of a single-sex environment at all, they need it most in the elementary school because of the developmental disparity" (p. 24). According to the research report "How Schools Shortchange Girls" elicited by the American Association of University Women, boys are called on more frequently than girls, and teachers spend more time with boys, partly because boys are more likely to volunteer to answer questions and less likely to know the answer when they volunteer (S. M. Bailey et al., 1999).

POSITIVE ROLE MODELS AND ISSUES OF "SELF"

Boys and girls need positive role models, both in the adults who guide them and in literature and other study materials. There is still a paucity of women, particularly minority women, and reference to women's roles within history and science. There remains an emphasis on ideas and solutions to problems that are oriented to male development and cognitive problem-solving style. Women's History Month was created to fill this void; however, it must be celebrated to fulfill its purpose.

In general, girls are more relational and less competitive; boys are less relational and more competitive. Although competition appears to be the backbone of academia, it is destructive to many girls' relationships. Girls are more likely to withdraw than to speak out and voice opposition to the status quo, for fear of risking damage to an important relationship (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986). They are more dedicated to peaceful resolution and less likely to form hierarchical relational patterns. Girls tend to share power more compared with boys and to use it to empower a group rather than an individual (Gilligan, 1993; Gilligan, Ward, & Taylor, 1988; Jordan, Kaplan, Miller, Stiver, & Surrey, 1991).

Although the need to create multiple selves for multiple roles (with parents, teachers, classmates, close friends, romantic partners, and workmates) is a task for adolescence, it is important to recognize the practice as necessary in early childhood. The ability to understand and validate the "true self" rests on the many experiences of attempting to say and do what the individual sees as his or her innermost truth or self and to be accepted and encouraged in revealing and processing the thoughts, feelings, and actions that are "real." The more criticism and lack of acceptance a child experiences, the more likely the child is to create a "false self" that is projected outward. The child's sense of congruence and self-esteem is weakened because what is seen by others, reinforced, and praised is not the real self—it is as if another person is receiving accolades and awards. This is often the experience of childhood that is described by gay, lesbian, bisexual, intersexed, and transgendered adults.

GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Sexuality is a difficult topic for most Americans. As a topic of exploration, it is often highly regulated in schools. Although the media uses sex to sell everything from toothpaste to all-terrain vehicles, most individuals are very uncomfortable discussing the subject of sexuality. Most adults are woefully ignorant of normal sexual development; an overwhelming majority are unaware of issues in homosexual development.

Recent studies suggest that sexual orientation is established early, especially for gay men; may occur as a function of genetic and prenatal influences; and is marked, to some extent, by cross-sex-typed behavior in early childhood. In a number of studies, gay teens were similar to heterosexual adolescents in self-esteem but were significantly more likely to be targets of bias-related victimization from early childhood and to experience stress around revealing or having others learn or perceive their sexual orientation. Hershberger and D'Augelli (1995) obtained data from almost 200 male and female gay, lesbian, and bisexual adolescents (two thirds White and one third minority; ages 15–21 years) from all regions of the United States. These participants reported that from elementary school through high school they had experienced high levels of victimization on the basis of their sexual orientation, ranging from verbal insults (80%) to physical assault (17%). Over 40% reported a past suicide attempt, some during elementary school, and most experienced difficulties with "coming-out" issues. Family support buffered the negative relation between victimization and self-esteem but was eclipsed by the most powerful predictor of mental health: self-concept and self-acceptance. Victimization was not directly related to suicidal thinking and suicide attempts.

In another study addressing issues facing minority gay and bisexual male adolescents, Rotheram-Borus and her colleagues (Rotheram-Borus, Rosaria, Van Rossem, Reid, & Gillis, 1995) collected data over 2 years from 130 predominantly Black and Hispanic adolescents (ages 14–19) attending a gay-identified, urban, community-based agency. These adolescents were comparable with their heterosexual counterparts by having engaged in problem behaviors such as sexual risk acts and substance use and had similar emotional distress rates.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION OF PARENTS

Strickland (1995), reporting on dramatic advances over the past 25 years in understanding and appreciation for sexual orientation, noted that children reared by same-sex couples have been found to be as well or better adjusted than their counterparts reared similarly in heterosexual homes. Specifically, she referenced Patterson (1995), who found that lesbian couples with at least one child between 4 and 9 years old reported that they shared household tasks and decision making equally, although biological mothers were more involved in child care and nonbiological mothers in paid employment.

In general, research has shown that parents are more satisfied and children better adjusted when child-care tasks are somewhat evenly distributed between two parents. Flaks, Ficher, Masterpasqua, and Joseph (1995) compared 15 lesbian couples with young children born through artificial insemination and 15 matched, heterosexual parent families. As found in earlier research, the children of lesbian and heterosexual parents were remarkably similar. When differences were noted, they were most likely to favor lesbian families. Children of lesbian parents were somewhat more positively adaptive in both cognitive functioning and behavioral adjustment. In the largest study to date of gay parents, J. M. Bailey, Bobrow, Wolfe, and Mikach (1995) found that more than 90% of the adult sons of gay fathers are heterosexual, suggesting that any environmental influence of gay fathers on their sons' orientation is miniscule.

A similar longitudinal study focused on children raised by lesbian parents. Golombok and Tasker (1996) interviewed 25 children of lesbian mothers and a control group of 21 children of heterosexual single mothers. The children were first seen at age 9.5 years on average, and again at age 23.5 years on average. The large majority of children who grew up in lesbian families identified as heterosexual. Children of gay and lesbian parents may be more likely to explore same-sex relationships, particularly if their childhood family environment was characterized by an openness and acceptance of lesbian and gay relationships; however, current research suggests that exploration will not lead to adopting a gay or lesbian sexual orientation if the individual is heterosexual.

Because gay and lesbian teens and heterosexuals who experiment with same-sex relationships during their early teen years suffer more frequent encounters with prejudice and discrimination than adult homosexuals (Hershberger & D'Augelli, 2000), it is paramount to realize that the most important protective factor against self-destruction is positive self-concept formed in early and middle childhood. As noted previously, there is a period of flexibility of stereotype and self-generated gender rules that occurs in elementary school-age children. It is during this time that adults can influence flexibility of thought and acceptance of self and others. That is, of course, if adults understand and accept issues of difference that include sexual orientation. Homophobia, an irrational fear of being homosexual, often emerges when sexuality and sexual orientation issues are addressed.

NORMAL SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN

In general, it is important for the elementary school counselor to understand the importance of positive self-concept. It is also important for counselors to know themselves and recognize their personal biases and stereotypes and, most importantly, lack of information about topics such as sexuality and sexual orientation.

School counselors must understand the normal sexual development of children. Some facts that are basic include the following:

- There is an intensification of interest in sexuality in early childhood (ages 3 to 8). During that time, ability to reach sexual climax increases from 32% of boys 2 to 12 months of age, 57% of boys age 5 through 8, to 80% of boys age 10 to 13. The genitals are the most important point of personal physical pleasure. Masturbation is common and supported as natural by the Child Study Association of America in its publication, "When Children Ask About Sex" (Child Study Association of America, 1969).
- Kinsey and colleagues found that 3-year-old children showed awareness of genital differences between men and women. They noted that 3-year-olds did a great deal of kissing. Four-year-olds also enjoyed kissing, homosexual and heterosexual play without erotic stimulation, mild masturbation, cuddling with family members, touching, and tickling (Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948; Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebhard, 1953).
- At 4 years of age, children show interest in sex questions pertaining to where babies come from and how babies grow, mature, and come out of their mothers. They often associate or confuse childbirth with elimination and may engage in theatrical efforts to "show" their conception of childbirth.
- Five-year-olds often behave very different than they did 1 year earlier. They seem more serious about themselves and more secretive. They often imitate adult "grown-up" behavior. An interest in having a baby and babies in general is often displayed when there is a real-life opportunity to see, touch, feel, hold a baby, or talk with someone about a real baby. Sex play tends to decrease, and children tend to become more modest. Playing house does not usually have a sexual theme.
- At age 6, there may be more practical investigation. If children are told by their peers or playmates about sexual intercourse, they may ask their parents about it. There may be some mild sex play or exhibitionism in school toilets; there is increased sex play with the opposite sex usually for purposes of intellectual curiosity.
- At age 7 or 8, the sexual interest is often limited to masturbation and transferred to speculation about sex roles of boys and girls. There is often a self-consciousness about their own body, and exhibitionism is not common.
- Interpersonal erotic awakening, for example, seeking or gaining erotic satisfaction from participation with others rather than stimulating oneself, occurs at different ages. However, it is unlikely to occur before age 9 or 10 and more likely to happen between ages 10 and 13. If a child under age 8 demonstrates serious erotic interest in the opposite sex, it is likely that the child has been instructed by an older child or an adult. It is unlikely that the child has learned this behavior from movies or television or that the child is "naturally sexually curious."
- Children often do not reveal their personal discrepancies from the "norm." For example, gay and lesbian adults recall that they did not reveal that they were attracted to same-sex individuals when asked by peers which television character is "sexiest." This preoccupation with "cuteness" and "sexiness" of the opposite sex normally develops by age 8 or 9 in girls and shortly thereafter in boys.

SUGGESTIONS FOR REINFORCING POSITIVE SELF-CONCEPT IN CHILDREN

To help all children develop positive self-concept, elementary school counselors, teachers, and other school personnel are encouraged to note the following suggestions:

- Challenge the stereotyped ideas of gender. Encourage boys to be verbal and girls to voice their opinions.
- Encourage affective vocabularies in boys and girls. Be particularly aware of boys failing to use feeling words.
- Encourage a rotation pattern among classrooms, with teachers drawing names from a holder randomly rather than calling on classroom children at will.
- Be sure to include boys and girls in career exploration and show men and women engaging in the same career in visual career displays.
- Celebrate Women's History Month. Highlight women who have contributed to history and achieved greatness. Recognize women in all walks of life, including those who have chosen traditional roles. Celebrate the women in your school.
- Emphasize a woman each day, letting her tell her story and give advice to students.
- Bring women to school who have achieved in traditional and nontraditional careers.
- Eschew the myth of girls and math. Consider forming an all-girl math class.
- Advocate for gender equity in sports and in other activities. Encourage boys to join clubs or enter activities that might be considered "sissy." Find a male sponsor to encourage boys to join such activities and demonstrate male acceptance.
- Bring men who have elected nontraditional roles to school. Stay-at-home male parents, men job-sharing in order to shoulder half of the child-care responsibility, men nurses, elementary school teachers (particularly if your school does not have male classroom teachers), chefs.
- Normalize androgyny. Let children know that it is not important to advertise one's gender.
- Reward tolerance of all types; educate bigotry. Do not accept negative stereotype as normal development; refute, educate, and reframe it.
- Develop your own personal plan for challenge of stereotype and participation in personal challenges that lead to understanding of difference.
- Expand your circle of acquaintances and experiences to include diversity in areas of race, culture, gender, and so on.
- Talk to other school counselors and teachers and share programming and experience.

SUMMARY

This chapter discussed how issues of gender, including the concepts of masculinity and femininity, affect the developmental process of elementary school children. Issues of normal sexual development and sexual orientation were also explored. School counselors were invited to help students develop positive self-concept and self-esteem by understanding how these issues contribute toward the formation of self-image and encouraging elementary students to accept difference as individual variation rather than divergence from a standard irrevocable norm.

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Chapter 20

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDERED (GLBT) YOUTHS AND FAMILIES

Sue Strong and Connie J. Callahan

THREE MILLION GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, AND transgendered (GLBT) students in American schools are at risk of school failure, suicide, and serious life problems. This chapter examines the problems faced by this diverse population, discusses the legal responsibilities of the school, suggests professional training issues, and addresses the counselor's role with GLBT students and their families. Harassed GLBT students need school counselors who will understand and work with them. School personnel are now beginning to understand the importance of treating all students with respect.

HATRED, MISINFORMATION, AND HOSTILE ENVIRONMENTS

"I refuse to allow hatred and ignorance to taint our schools, our classrooms and our children," declared California Governor Gray Davis as he signed into law AB 537 (The Student Safety and Violence Prevention Act of 1999), a nondiscrimination law protecting students from sexual orientation-based discrimination (GLSEN [Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network], 2000, p. 12). California is one of several states to ban antigay bias in K–12 schools in the 1990s. State laws (including Wisconsin in 1987, Massachusetts in 1993, Connecticut in 1997, and California in 1999) and administrative codes (including Alaska in 1975, Pennsylvania in 1992, Florida in 1992, Connecticut in 1997, and Utah in 1999) have been passed to protect gay and lesbian students in schools (GLSEN, 2000). The Massachusetts Governor's Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth in 1993 created the foundation for the Safe Schools movement of the 1990s, which resulted in the addition of sexual orientation to the state's education code and establishment of teacher training through the state department of education (Jennings, 2000). At the 1995 American Counseling Association Conference in Denver, Colorado, the American School Counselors Association passed a position paper on sexual minority youths, committing school counselors to the fullest possible development of each individual by reducing the barriers of misinformation, myth, ignorance, hatred, and discrimination that prevent sexual orientation minorities from achieving individual potential, healthy esteem, and equal status (American School Counselor Association, 1995, 2000).

This initiative laid the blueprint for other activism and program changes such as the Gay-Straight Alliance movement (Anderson, 2000a), the film titled *It's Elementary* (Chasnoff & Cohen, 1997), and the *Just the Facts About Sexual Orientation and Youth: A Primer for Principals, Educators, and School Personnel* (Anderson, 2000b) that was endorsed by the American Association of School Administrators. It also laid the foundation for legal and legislative policy changes such as *Nabozny v. Podlesny* (1996), *Wagner v. Fayetteville* (1998; see Bart 1998), and The Student Safety and Violence Prevention Act (1999). According to Saghir, Robins, and Walbian (1973), many gay men and lesbians sensed something "different" about themselves as early as age 4 or 5. Sears (1992) indicated that the age at which most gay youths acknowledge their homosexuality is 13 years of age. Remafedi (1987) indicated that 45% of gay male students and 20% of lesbian female students experience verbal or physical assault in high school. Twenty-eight percent of these youths are forced to drop out of school because of harassment resulting from their sexual orientation. When 53% of high school students report hearing homophobic slurs like "faggot" from their teachers, respect is missing in schools and society's values are not being taught (Middleton & Coles, 2000). Schools need to teach values based on equality and respect for all. Society has passed hate crime laws and proclaims value for all human life. Several high-profile cases have ruled that schools have a responsibility to make sure their environments are safe for all students, gay and straight alike. If they do not, they may be held liable for damages. However, school-by-school litigation is expensive. Teaching schools to take action to protect students and to develop humanistic safe school measures is a more realistic way to provide an education for all.

Gonsiorek (1988) and Herdt (1989) estimated that 3 million male and lesbian adolescents in the United States have a homosexual orientation. Because this population is at risk for suicide (Gibson, 1989), alcohol and substance abuse (Rosario, Hunter, & Rotheram-Borus, 1992), sexual acting out with consequences of sexually transmitted disease infection or pregnancy (Savin-Williams, 1988), and victimization and violence (Hunter, 1990), counselors need to develop an understanding of and strategies for assisting gay youths.

Many of these young people face harassment at school, and many end up dropping out of high school. A report from the U.S. Department of Justice (O'Conor, 1994) stated that gays and lesbians were the most frequent victims of hate crimes and that school was the primary setting for hate crime violence. Comstock (1991) noted that crimes against GLBT students in schools occur with greater frequency than crimes against the general populations in the school setting. The Massachusetts Department of Education (1995) conducted a survey of more than 4,000 students and reported that gay male and lesbian students were five times more likely than heterosexual students to skip school because they feared for their physical safety. Bart (1998) reported that one in six gay students will be beaten up so badly that they will need to seek medical attention and that the dropout rate for gay students is estimated at three times the national average.

An Iowa study found that the average high school student hears antigay remarks 25 times a day and that teachers who hear such slurs fail to respond to them 97% of the time (Carter, 1997). Research by Pilkington and D'Augelli (1995) revealed that GLBT youths (ages 15 to 21) experience high levels of verbal and physical assault as a result of their orientation. Schools allow a hostile environment for GLBT youths.

Counselors shy away from this population, even though Krysiak (1987) found that the school counselor was in a unique position to assist GLBT youths. The American School Counselor Association (1995, 2000) published a position statement with regard to sexual minority youths that called for supporting minority youths and for reducing discrimination against such youths. The National Education Association passed a resolution stating that every school district should provide counseling by trained personnel for students struggling with their sexual or gender orientation (Flax, 1990). There is a need for counselors to develop an understanding of GLBT students. However, Betz (1991) and Graham, Rawlings, Halpern, and Hermes (1984) indicated that counselors are not trained to work with GLBT clients. There are laws that protect students from harassment, and schools that have failed to implement those laws have paid for their lack of involvement in this matter.

LEGAL DEFINITIONS AND LAWS

Sexual harassment in schools is a form of prohibited sex discrimination according to Title IX of the 1972 Federal Education Amendments. This amendment prohibits harassing behavior in schools and in school-sponsored events and on transportation. Cases of sexual harassment involve students harassing each other or anybody. *Sexual harassment* is defined as unwanted sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or verbal or physical behavior of a sexual nature. This includes behavior that alarms or annoys someone, interferes with someone's privacy, or creates an intimidating or hostile environment.

While Title IX does not specifically prohibit harassment or discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, it does prohibit harassing conduct of a sexual nature regardless of the gender or sexual orientation of the people involved. Guidelines released in 1997 by the U.S. Department of Education stated that sexual harassment directed at GLBT students may constitute sexual harassment prohibited by Title IX:

> [For example] harassing conduct of sexual nature directed toward gay or lesbian students (e.g. if a male student or a group of male students target a lesbian student for physical sexual advances) may create a sexually hostile environment and, therefore, may be prohibited by Title IX. (Office of Civil Rights, 1997, p. 1120)

COSTS OF IGNORING LAW

Since 1996, several school districts and school personnel have been sued for ignoring the rights of GLBT students (Safe Schools Coalition of Washington State, 1999). In July 1996, the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals upheld Jamie Nabozny's (*Nabozny v. Podlesny, 1996*) right to sue school officials under the Equal Protection Clause of the

Fourteenth Amendment in the U.S. Constitution. Jamie had experienced antigay harassment from his peers throughout his middle school and high school years, and the appeals court found that three school principals were personally liable for not enforcing school district policies against harassment to the same extent that they protected other students. For 5 years, Nabozny suffered abuse that involved students throwing objects at him to students holding him down, urinating on him, and pretending to rape him. He was beaten to the point that he required hospitalization. The principals were considered to have shown a deliberate indifference to Nabozny's individual constitutional rights. The Nabozny case was the first time school officials were held responsible for antigay harassment committed by students (Fisher, Schimmel, & Kelly, 1999). The principals settled with Jamie for $900,000.

In 1997, Arkansas high school student Willi Wagner and his parents filed a Title IX sex discrimination complaint with the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights. Willi's middle and high school peers who perceived him to be gay had harassed him. Willi was harassed for 2 years, and when he was beaten by fellow classmates, his mother asked the U.S. Department of Education to treat Willi's abuse as a case of sexual harassment under Title IX. In 1998, Fayetteville Public Schools agreed to recognize various forms of sexual harassment, including sexual harassment directed at gay or lesbian students (Bart, 1998).

In November 1998, the Kent School District settled a case out of court by agreeing to pay Mark Iversen $40,000 and by agreeing to change its policies, procedures, and training in the district. Mark sued for not being protected from harassment by peers and school district employees for 6 years of escalating antigay verbal harassment and physical harassment leading to an assault by eight students during his senior year. Cases like these illustrate the need for schools to provide safe educational environments for GBLT students.

Any school district that does not develop and implement policies protecting the rights of these young people may face unneeded lawsuits. GLBT students are *harmed* when others blame, reject, minimize, offend, and harass, and this includes failure to protect or doing too little when school officials knew and grievously omitted protection for students. GLBT students are *helped* when the targets of harassment are supported, when abuse is stopped, and when the offenders are all trained to deal with diversity in a professional and ethical manner.

STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

The 1993 report, Making Schools Safe for Gay and Lesbian Youth, laid the foundation for designing professional development training for school staff. The report stated that schools need to establish the following:

1. School policy to protect GLBT students from harassment, violence, and discrimination.
2. Training for teachers, counselors, and educators in issues relevant to the needs and problems of GLBT youths, including protection from harassment and violence as well as dropout and suicide prevention.
3. Model school-based support groups such as the Gay and Straight Alliance.
4. Gay positive, school-based counseling for gay and lesbian youths and families.
5. Library collections that provide accurate information on GLBT youths.

6. Curriculum that incorporates GLBT themes and subject matter into all disciplines in an age-appropriate fashion

(http://www.glsen.org/templates/resources/record.html?section=18&record=382)

Results from the Safe Schools for Gay and Lesbian Students Program for staff development reveal several tips for trainers, which include addressing staff resistance by (a) focusing on professional responsibilities instead of personal beliefs; (b) addressing everyone's homophobia and heterosexism regardless of sexual orientation; (c) linking training to the school's mission; (d) making the training real by including live speakers, stories, and films; and (e) making the training practical and establishing small incremental goals for change (http://www.glsen.org/templates/resources/record.html?section=18&record=382).

School counselors are motivated by their professional code of ethics and the social action movement in the American Counseling Association to take a stand on social issues and change systems that perpetuate discrimination and disregard human rights, especially advocating for the GLBT community (Lee & Walz, 1998). The postmodernism movement indicates that traditional beliefs regarding sexuality change as cultures progress beyond survival needs, and the current intergenerational cultural shift has resulted in more permissive attitudes toward homosexuality (Inglehart, 1997). Counselors who follow their code of ethics will embrace social change and work to help GLBT youths develop their full potential.

THE COUNSELOR'S ROLE WITH GLBT TEENS

Anderson (1994) reviewed recommendations for curbing harassment against gay and lesbian students. The suggestions included using inclusive language, challenging antigay slurs, designating GLBT-friendly people for this population, making resources and materials available and visible, educating staff members, supporting GLBT colleagues, using GLBT colleagues as role models, making appropriate referrals, and referring parents of GLBT students to groups such as Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG). Taking direct action such as challenging antigay slurs and all harassing statements will create a climate of respect in schools. If every responsible adult refused to let harassing comments stand in schools, proper attitudes and respect toward fellow students would be modeled. There are many issues to address with GLBT youths.

Many GLBT youths feel isolated, suffer from poor self-image, and hide their sexual orientation while they are attempting to discover who they are and how they fit into society. School counselors can facilitate the development and safety of this population by using several strategies.

First, the counselors must be educated about homosexuality. Most educators have undergone training around issues related to the special concerns of youths, but few have specific training in counseling this population. School counselors have been the subject of research studies regarding their willingness to educate and advocate for GLBT students. Sears (1992) reported that school counselors expressed the feeling that they should be more proactive and supportive as professionals committed to the welfare of all their students, but countervailing expressions of personal prejudice, ignorance, and fear reduced their professional intervention and support to this student population. Walters and Hayes (1998) indicated that school counselors are concerned about how their limited understanding of homosexuality and bisexuality and the coming-out process may limit their effectiveness with GLBT students. Counselors should take a human sexuality course that includes up-to-date information about sexual development and orientation and that covers issues such as the profound negative impact of homophobia. The course should also help counselors recognize the possibility of sexuality issues when students are involved in suicide attempts, dropping out of school, running away, pregnancy, and substance abuse.

THE COUNSELOR'S ROLE WITH FAMILIES OF GLBT YOUTHS

The counselors should also be educated about the problems GLBT youths face in their families. In a study of self-identified lesbian and gay youths in New York City, 41% reported suffering violence from their families, peers, or strangers. Of the violent incidents, 46% were directly gay related and primarily perpetrated by family members (Hunter, 1990). Preadolescents who exhibit behaviors deemed not gender appropriate are teased and bullied by family members and peers from an early age. Negative labeling creates negative introjects and the internalization of a negative self-concept. Maylon (1982) indicated that homophobic socialization have disruptive influences on a child's socialization process, development of identity, self-esteem, defenses, cognitions, and psychological integrity. Signorile (1995) wrote: "Because of the social stigma attached to them, the mere words 'gay,' and 'lesbian'—not to mention 'homosexual,' 'fag,' 'dyke,' and 'queer'—are terms that most people don't associate with themselves" (p. 6). Family members who call a child names like "sissy" and "fag" instill a sense of inferiority in the child from an early age. These children begin to feel that they are wrong and different. They often have no one with whom they can discuss these feelings in a nonjudgmental setting. School counselors may provide the only safe environment for exploration.

THE COUNSELOR'S ROLE WITH GAY FAMILIES

There are 6 to 10 million children of gay parents in the United States (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere [COLAGE], 1998). Gay families rear children with the same incidence of heterosexuality as the general population. Research indicates that there is no evidence that children are harmed in any way from having gay parents (Shaffer, 1999).

School counselors may find themselves not only counseling GLBT youths but also consulting with parents who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered. Many children from GLBT families are simultaneously dealing with their parent's coming-out and divorce processes (Terndrup & Ritter, 1995). Often the adjustment to divorce takes precedent over the adjustment to the parent's sexual orientation shift. Children need reassurance that their emotional relationship with both parents will not change, and families need time to adjust. Children may need to grieve the loss of the heterosexual parent, nuclear family, and the "American Dream." Children may feel positive about their family relationships yet still feel conflict because of the negative social stigma of heterosexism and homophobia. Helping the children to deconstruct the concept of family may be useful. Families can be created by choice as well as by sexual chance. The concept of family can be redefined to be a group of people who care and share. Children of GTBT parents may question their own sexual orientation, especially with the current focus on biological determinants of homosexuality. It is important for school counselors to educate children and openly discuss their fears. Children go through a process of coming out as a child of a gay parent, and they need assistance in navigating this process of determining whether to keep a secret or risk rejection. The process of coming out as a child of a GLBT parent will be ongoing as it is for the parent. Eventually children need to recognize both the stresses and positives of growing up in a GLBT household.

It is important to refer children and parents to associations, support groups, and bibliotherapy that will help normalize and facilitate their experience, including groups such as COLAGE, PFLAG, National Lesbian Rights Center, Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International, and Welcoming Congregations of mainstream churches. Children need peer support and networking with other children of GLBT parents to reduce the isolation they may feel. If possible, the school counselor should encourage both parents to be supportive of each other so that joint custody and coparenting can continue after a marriage has ended. It is important that the GLBT parent be aware of potential legal problems regarding custody before going public with his or her sexuality.

If the GLBT parent decides it is in the child's best interest emotionally and legally, he or she should come out to the child before someone else tells the child. Children seldom initiate the discussion regarding their parent's sexual orientation with either the school counselor or the parent. It is important that parents plan the time, place, and conversation when they decide to come out to their children, and keep the conversation positive and sincere. Children are never too young to be told, but coming-out strategies vary with the child's age and stage. Be prepared to answer the child's questions, including the following: (a) What does GLBT mean? (b) What makes someone GLBT? (c) Will they (the children) be gay? (d) What should they tell their friends? (e) Does the other parent know? (f) What does this mean regarding the parent's relationships with the opposite sex? (Terndrup & Ritter, 1995). Coming out is not a singular event, and the answer to these questions will vary for a child who is a preschooler, elementary child, adolescent, or young adult.

The questions that children in GLBT families may have will be the same questions that GBLT students will have about themselves. They will be asking themselves what their same-sex feelings mean, what it means to be GLBT, what they should tell their friends, what they should tell their parents, and how they will fit in the world. Knowledgeable school counselors will be prepared to work with GLBT teens and with GLBT parents.

School counselors should support and protect sexual minority youths by making it safe for GLBT students to come to the counseling office. Counselors should promote policies protecting all students against sexual harassment, including harassment that expressly mentions sexual orientation. Webb, Hunnicutt, and Metha (1997) discussed elements of effective sexual harassment policies. School counselors can provide classroom guidance activities that include violence prevention activities and character education to increase respect and tolerance and invite discussion of homosexual topics.

Using classroom guidance activities, school counselors can be advocates who work on school curricula. Young people have demonstrated that society cannot simply tell them how to feel and behave. Young individuals need information. Famous gay and lesbian people (e.g., Walt Whitman, Bessie Smith, and Eleanor Roosevelt) have made important contributions to art, literature, music, science, history, medicine, and sports. Anderson (1994) suggested that schools can create exhibits of GLBT people to promote awareness. The American Library Association has a Gay and Lesbian Caucus that can provide support for building a library collection. Chasnoff and Cohen (1997) and Lipkin (1992) have developed examples of curriculum that promote anti-harassment policies of GLBT students. Including curricula about gay and lesbians will provide GLBT students with role models, will show that GLBT individuals lead viable and productive lives, will reduce social stigma and homophobic attitudes, and will open the door to discussions about sexuality.

Last, school counselors need to address issues that affect individual students who come to them for help. Conflict areas that need to be explored with GLBT students include power; autonomy and intimacy; sexual and personal identity; ways to handle homophobia in society; stages in the coming-out process; differences of race, culture, and class; and money and family conflicts. School counselors who are afraid to address issues with GLBT students are psychologically narrowing down their worlds and are ethically and legally shirking their responsibilities to students.

SUMMARY

Schools who have not protected and worked with GLBT students have been sanctioned by the courts for their failure to do this. Through effective prevention efforts, school personnel can reduce violence against GLBT students and can assist these students in achieving their full academic and social potential. There have been and will always be children who grow up to be gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered (Coleman & Remafedi, 1989), and these youths will continue to suffer in physical, emotional, and social ways unless something is done on their behalf.

In addition, there are 6 to 10 million children of gay parents who often grow up "culturally gay but erotically straight" and are in a unique position to bridge the gap between the gay and straight worlds because they know the issues intimately and have a real investment in combating homophobia (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere, 1998).

School counselors need to operate ethically and legally, and they need to advocate for social justice on behalf of GLBT students and families. To do so, they will need to examine their own fears, gather information about the GLBT community, not tolerate abuse and harassment in their workplace, respect confidentiality, understand that GLBT students are at-risk students, and dig deep for the personal courage to be a social advocate for this underrepresented group.

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Section V

TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER RESOURCES FOR THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Chapter 21

SCHOOL COUNSELOR TECHNOLOGY COMPETENCIES IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Russell A. Sabella and J. Michael Tyler

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY UNDERPINS THE FASTEST GROWING industries and high-wage jobs, provides the tools needed to compete in every business today, and drives growth in every major industrialized nation. Recognizing this trend, President Bill Clinton stated,

> All students should feel as comfortable with a keyboard as a chalkboard; as comfortable with a laptop as a textbook. The rest of society would fall behind if it did not get a grounding in the rudiments of computers at an early age.
> (www.whitehouse. gov/WH/ New/html/19980605-28045.html)

To effectively work with students and other educational stakeholders, school counselors too must maintain basic levels of technological literacy.

According to Myrick and Sabella (1995), some counselors believe that they can still effectively perform their jobs "the old-fashioned way"—keeping index cards instead of a database; using a typewriter rather than a word processor; using overheads in lieu of multimedia presentations; and relying on perhaps a handful of periodicals rather than accessing the highly expansive menu of on-line full-text resources. They justify avoiding computer technology by reasoning that their already familiar low-tech solutions are still effective. Critics of this excuse say that such

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We would like to acknowledge the work of the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) Technology Interest Network, and especially the group's chair, Dr. Thomas H. Hohenshil, for their work in developing the counselor technological competencies.

thinking is shortsighted because the world of technology is the world in which our children live and will be more an integral part of their society than even ours. Other counselors acknowledge the usefulness and need for keeping up with the rapidly changing times although they are fearful. Their customary responses, "I feel intimidated by computers," "My kids know more about computers than I do," and "I'm not a technical person," suggest that although counselors may be interested or even intrigued, they frequently feel awkward and uneasy with computers.

Although computers and related technologies are rapidly changing, one fact remains constant: Counselors who resist the new tools of this and future generations will find it increasingly more difficult to do so. According to Sabella (1999), counselors who took an early interest and continued to gradually follow technology's progression have probably accumulated relatively high levels of technological literacy at a manageable pace. Veterans to computer and Internet technology may find themselves only having to keep pace with incremental changes, new additions, and creative ways for harnessing their power to more effectively and efficiently do their jobs. For those who have more recently taken an interest or have forced themselves to be exposed to technology because of trends or new standards, becoming technologically literate may be a burdensome venture. The good news, however, is that one can effectively start today. The road to technological literacy does not necessarily have a beginning and an end, but like an intricate system of highways and side roads, can be accessed from many on-ramps. Beginning a course of self-study and formal training will better assure more enjoyable travel for the road ahead.

This chapter introduces school counselors to the 12 technological competencies for counselors established by the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) Technology Interest Network (1999). Included for each competency are a number of examples and Web site references for how school counselors can apply technological knowledge and skills in their work in practical ways. The intent in developing the technological competencies was to provide the counseling profession with a uniform set of quality standards that describe appropriate levels of technological literacy among counselors. Note that, because Competencies 5 and 7 are highly related, they are presented together. These competencies should be an integral part of all counselor education programs and practicing counselor professional development plans. In response to the breakneck development of various technologies, the ACES technology competencies are anticipated to be updated every 3 years. Counselors are urged to conduct ongoing self-evaluations of their own level of technology competency based on each description while planning for both formal and informal future technology training.

Competency 1: Be able to use productivity software to develop Web pages, group presentations, letters, and reports.

A variety of basic software packages are available to the school counselor to assist in the completion of many daily chores. With careful planning, these products will assist in automating traditional school counselor tasks, increase the counselor's ability to work with more students, demonstrate the counselor's effectiveness, and decrease his or her total workload. At their best, these technologies help counselors to provide more services to a broader base of individuals more effectively.

Perhaps the most commonly used computer software program (with the exception of the Internet browsers) is the word-processing program. Originally, word-processing programs were designed to make the simple task of typing easier. However, word processing has come a long way since it arrived on many desktops two decades ago. A few examples will demonstrate the power that has been incorporated in current word-processing software.

Many word processors contain a *mail merge* feature that every school counselor should understand and use. This feature can be used to create lists of students that include teachers' names, parents' names, and other information such as a student's hobby or birth date. The counselor can use this information to create letters that can be quickly printed and sent to parents as reminders of special school events or to request a conference. This feature can also be creatively used to create Birthday Certificates for every child, Attendance Certificates for students who have good or improved attendance, or personalized notes for children who need a little extra contact during the week.

Many word-processing programs include *templates*, which can easily be used to create a Counseling and Student Development Newsletter. In addition, many of these packages can easily convert simple text-based information such as articles from a newsletter into HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) files, which are a set of rules that guide the look and utility of Web pages to display information. These HTML files can then be transferred to a *Web server* to develop a presence on the World Wide Web. Imagine having parents log-on to your school Web site to check the school schedule, dates for holidays, tips for helping children transition to a new grade, or activities to perform at home to help build esteem or develop social skills.

Taking slightly more skills than a typical word processor, spreadsheet programs are another essential tool for the school counselor's desktop. A simple spreadsheet can be created to track discipline referrals to the school counselor's office by category. The counselor can quickly sort this spreadsheet so that all similar referrals are grouped, providing a "picture" of what is occurring in a school. Counselors may believe that more referrals are made for violence than for other reasons, because these referrals may be the most emotionally evocative. However, by tracking the information carefully, the school counselor may recognize that most referrals within a building are made as a result of off-task behavior. This information can then be used to justify the development of a skills-based attention-enhancement program rather than focusing primarily on issues of violence.

Database programs can perform many of the functions already discussed, as well as many more. So-called *low-end* database software has limited functionality, whereas *high-end* products provide tremendous flexibility and power. An example of a simple database is a computer-based Rolodex or phone book. This system will maintain important names and contacts for easy access. A more complex database can perform more complicated tasks. Chances are, whatever school a counselor works in, student records are maintained in a database system to which the counselor will have access. A recent visit we made to a local school revealed that an existing database was available, and with the click of a few buttons, a report was generated that identified all of the children who had missed 10 or more days of school in a sample 4-week period. This provided an immediate list of children in need of services. A few more clicks of the mouse generated a list of all of the fifth-grade students failing a given subject and included their fourth-grade teachers for that same subject. This report provides important information about where a weakness may exist in the school and the student and suggests a need for intervention. Finally, a database of referrals that tracks dates, times, teachers, children, and offenses can be used to create reports showing patterns in behavior among teachers. This can be an excellent, data-driven method to identify consulting opportunities for the school counselor. Perhaps a teacher tends to make most referrals immediately following students' return from a "special" class. This might indicate the teacher can use assistance handling transitions. Another teacher might be found to make referrals primarily of female students for off-task behavior. This teacher may need assistance in developing classroom management strategies specifically for girls.

A final category of software with which the school counselor needs to be familiar is presentation software. Microsoft PowerPoint is an extremely popular example of this type of software. PowerPoint allows a counselor to easily create a multimedia presentation that can be used in large-group presentations or in large- or small-group guidance lessons, or to help facilitate work group meetings. PowerPoint allows the user to create text-based slides that can be projected (see Competency 2 below) for presentation of information to groups. If desired, audio clips, video clips, and still art can also be added to enhance the presentation. With a multimedia computer and a microphone, a complete lecture or audio track can be recorded that will play while the slide show automatically progresses. Such a presentation can be placed on a computer in a classroom and will automatically run, informing parents, students, or others of important information without the need for the counselor to be in attendance. Imagine delivering a multimedia lecture to a group of parents while you, the school counselor, answer individual student questions in a separate room! A useful feature of the program is its ability to save presentations in HTML format with the click of a single button. Once saved, the entire presentation can then be made available over the Internet for any individual who was unable to attend a meeting to view.

The purpose of incorporating these technologies into a school counselor's work is not to create new tasks. Rather, effectively used, these technologies will help the well-prepared school counselor complete his or her work more effectively by reaching larger numbers, targeting interventions, and focusing energy where it is most required.

Competency 2: Be able to use audiovisual equipment such as video recorders, audio recorders, projection equipment, videoconferencing equipment, and playback units.

In many settings, specific individuals are assigned to handle tasks that involve the setup, operation, and trouble-shooting of audiovisual equipment. However, if a school counselor relies on others to handle these tasks, they will be dependent on the time schedule, availability, and willingness of these other persons. Also, relying on others can compromise confidentiality when dealing with sensitive information. By becoming an informed operator of audiovisual equipment, the professional school counselor will be adequately prepared to respond to unexpected technical needs that invariably occur.

Counselors who are not skillful or knowledgeable about how to properly operate and troubleshoot audiovisual equipment are unnecessarily limiting their capabilities to work with clients and other stakeholders, especially in a group setting. Recording and presenting video, digital video disk (DVD), multimedia presentations, and online content are all an important part of meeting a counselor's responsibilities to counsel, consult, and coordinate. All counselors are at some time likely to experience the need to present a video related to career development as part of a large group guidance unit, use a multimedia presentation when consulting with a group of parents such as for an orientation, or clearly and appropriately display content using a high-luminescent overhead. The basic functions of these appliances have not changed a great deal over the years. Audiovisual machinery has become more sophisticated and automated and now include multilingual on-screen menus for choosing various operations. Understanding these basic operations can ensure that a counselor's presentation will be successful.

Competency 3: Be able to use computerized statistical packages.

For most school counselors, the mention of "statistics" creates a well-conditioned negative response related to poor math teaching in the past. Today's technology offers the opportunity for anyone to quickly and painlessly analyze information to aid in the decision-making process. The ability and willingness to use this technology may be the most important factor in a counselor demonstrating the usefulness of counseling services, and thereby ensuring the continued existence of quality school counseling programs.

Teachers and principals are expected to demonstrate their accountability by raising achievement on standardized tests. In many states, the ability to demonstrate effectiveness in this manner is directly tied to raises, teacher tenure, and administrator renewal. School counselors have not been expected to demonstrate accountability in this fashion. By not demonstrating effectiveness through test performance, school counselors in some areas have felt free to focus on their work without the threat of retribution for failing to contribute to increased test scores. However, in other areas, school counseling services have been severely curtailed as money has been shifted from student services to academic areas that have demonstrated effectiveness in improving test scores. As counselors become more skilled in demonstrating that their work directly affects student achievement, budget cuts will be more difficult to justify.

Statistical packages, including SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and SAS (Statistical Analysis System), have developed relatively simple interfaces that allow counselors (and other nonresearch trained professionals) to enter or import data and ask simple questions. Many spreadsheet programs, such as Microsoft Excel, also contain statistical modules capable of performing rudimentary procedures. All of these packages also contain "statistical coaches" that can offer answers to questions and will guide the user through the process of entering data, selecting statistical calculations to perform, and interpreting data. For example, a counselor might use statistical software to do the following:

- analyze pre- and posttest data from psychoeducational group interventions to evaluate effectiveness
- analyze information about differences in standardized test scores between different grade-level teams to determine if the differences are statistically significant and cause for concern
- develop empirically supported reports to demonstrate that students participating in peer helper programs have decreased referrals and increased grades after 6 months in the program

Competency 4: Be able to use computerized testing, diagnostic, and career decision-making programs with clients.

Increasingly, traditional paper-based assessment instruments and information tools are being computerized. In many cases, there is substantial reduction in costs because paper and printing costs are much higher than production of computer diskettes or CD-ROM technology. Furthermore, computer-based products can be quickly and easily updated. In many cases, computer software has the capacity to contact the manufacturer over the Internet and upgrade itself with no input from the user. An out-of-print book has never done that! By describing a few available products in various categories, the reader can gain an appreciation for the range of materials and their potential uses.

American Guidance Systems is a long-time supplier of materials to education professionals. Popular assessment instruments they market include the Behavior Assessment System for Children and the Social Skills Rating System (SSRS). These are administered as paper-and-pencil instruments but can be computer scored. Because the system allows for student self-reports as well as parents and teacher input, computer scoring is helpful to compare and contrast data from each different reporter. The SSRS can also be coupled with interpretive software to provide a full picture of a child's skills, strengths, and weaknesses and to develop an appropriate set of behavioral objectives to be addressed in counseling.

Technology is also being used to provide one-to-one interventions for students. CD-ROM-based computer programs can provide powerful, multimedia-based presentations for students. Skill-A-Vision and the School-to-Career CD-ROM (both available from Linx Educational, Atlantic Beach, Florida [www.linxedu.com]) are examples. Skill-A-Vision introduces students to 43 SCANS (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills) skills groups in 11 categories. Coupled with video, audio, and text-based presentation, this package can be used to reinforce information provided in other student development settings. The School-to-Career Survey CD-ROM allows students to complete a 75-item survey to help identify potential career opportunities in a number of areas. Coupled with the Young Person's Occupational Outlook Handbook (CD-ROM version), students can obtain significant career information on their own. Additional CD-ROM products are available to assist counselors in a variety of areas, including SAT/ACT preparation, date rape, substance abuse, goal setting, and self-esteem.

Competency 5: Be able to use e-mail.

Competency 7: Be able to subscribe, participate in, and sign off counseling related listservs.

The ACES Technology Competencies 5 and 7 are presented together because both focus on electronic communication (ACES Technology Interest Network, 1999). While the structure and use of traditional e-mail and listservs differ, both are essentially methods of passing written communication from one person to another almost instantaneously in an electronic fashion. This section also briefly touches on other communication media, including chatrooms and netconferencing.

E-mail, or electronic mail, is simply a process for constructing a letter on a computer and then sending that letter via the Internet to another person. The process has become such a part of life for so many Americans that its inclusion in this book at first appears almost too rudimentary for a well-educated audience. However, the implications of communicating via e-mail are tremendous and well worth consideration.

E-mail exists in several formats, each of which has advantages and disadvantages. In some schools, the e-mail system is strictly internal. In these settings, e-mail may only be sent to individuals who are users of the network, for example, other faculty and staff. In most settings, school computer networks can also access the Internet, providing employees with the ability to communicate with anyone else who is also connected to the Internet. The school counselor can use e-mail to accomplish many tasks, such as sending e-mail reminders to parents prior to school conferences, using e-mail to contact parents who do not return phone calls, and sending e-mail notes of appreciation to students who have contributed to school activities. If a school does not provide e-mail to its faculty and staff, school counselors are encouraged to take advantage of one of the many free Web-based e-mail services.
Internet sites including www.Hotmail.com, www.mail.yahoo.com, and www.mail.com offer free Internet-based e-mail accounts. These Internet-based accounts have the advantage of being readily accessible from any computer with an Internet connection. If counselors do not already have and regularly use an e-mail account, we encourage them to set one up immediately. Their knowledge and comfort will increase quickly, and they will soon find an entire world of opportunity opening up.

Counselors can use a *distribution list* to communicate with a large group of individuals at one time. A distribution list is a collection of e-mail names that have been identified as a group. To contact everyone in the group, the user enters the name of the list, and every e-mail address on the list is automatically contacted. Examples of how counselors have used distribution lists include periodically contacting all new students in a school throughout the year, reminding all eighth-grade parents of an upcoming high school orientation session, and advertising to all special education teachers a special in-service program being presented on vocational development programs for students receiving exceptional student services.

Another type of distribution system is referred to as a *listserv*. A listserv allows messages to be communicated from one individual to a complete distribution list quickly and efficiently. Listservs differ from distribution lists because any member of the list can send a message to the entire list. When an individual wants to communicate with the list, a message is sent to the owner, and the message is then relayed automatically to the entire list.

Consider using a listserv to do the following:

- Keep all members of a parent advisory group informed between meetings
- Answer questions from students that are part of a peer helper program
- Communicate with parents whose language is not English by having a bilingual teacher translate communication into another language

A popular listserv for the professional counselor is the International Counselor Network (ICN). This is a very active list with members around the world who engage in lively and timely discussions of topics affecting the professional counselor. Counselors routinely post requests for books to use with specific clients, information for referrals, and questions about recent research and current topics. Often times, responses to requests for information come within minutes because of the large number of counselors who participate. Counselors can learn more about ICN, including information on how to subscribe, by visiting them on the Internet at http:// members.home.com/ruste/icn.html. To learn more about listservs in general and find a list on almost any topic, visit http://www.liszt.com.

Another technology tool for communication that can be used in many counseling interventions is similar to a listserv and is called a *bulletin board*. A bulletin board can be thought of as a place where individuals write e-mail (as in a listserv), but instead of mailing that e-mail to everyone on a list, the e-mail is posted on a bulletin board, and whoever is interested may come and read what has been posted. Uses of a bulletin board might include the following: a discussion of limit-setting and discipline for parents, a spot for parents to ask questions and receive answers about school trips and events, and a discussion of activities parents can do to aid preschoolers in gaining skills necessary to enter kindergarten.

E-mail, listservs, and bulletin boards are powerful modes of asynchronous communication. This means that individuals can communicate with one another at different times. Asynchronous tools can be powerful because they allow for communication at times that are convenient for the participants. However, sometimes people need or prefer to speak more directly. Direct communication is considered synchronous. This reflects the idea that each participant has to synchronize or coordinate his or her dialogue with every other participant. Telephone conversations are an example of technology-mediated synchronous conversations. An increasingly popular form of synchronous communication is the electronic chatroom. *Chatrooms* are Internet sites in which individuals can speak directly to one or more other people in real time. It might be thought of as instantaneous e-mail. The synchronous nature of the chatroom allows for a dialogue that more closely resembles a face-to-face conversation that cannot be achieved in either e-mail or listserv communications. They may be used by counselors to conduct brief meetings with parents and may work particularly well when both parents are not available because of time or distance constraints.

One step above text-based chatrooms are videoconferencing applications. According to Webopedia (http://www.webopedia.com), *videoconferencing* involves conducting a conference between two or more participants at different sites by using computer networks to transmit audio and video data. Multipoint videoconferencing allows three or more participants to sit in a virtual conference room and communicate as if they were sitting right next to each other. Until the mid-1990s, the hardware costs made videoconferencing prohibitively expensive for most organizations, but that situation is changing rapidly. Many analysts believe that videoconferencing will be one of the fastest-growing segments of the computer industry in the latter half of the decade. Counselors who can competently operate videoconferencing equipment will more easily attend ongoing professional development opportunities, collaborate with others around the world, "visit" with parents and other stakeholders without leaving their desks, and enhance their work with students by conducting virtual meetings with them.

Chatroom software has been explored as a method for providing counseling interventions. Tyler (2000) demonstrated how communication software could be used to conduct a counseling support group in a college setting. Page et al. (2000) explored the use of chatroom software enhanced with visual images as a counseling intervention. As counselors become increasingly comfortable and knowledgeable about these technologies, their use as tools of intervention will increase. This will allow counselors in many schools to share expertise and group students with specific needs into tightly homogeneous groups run by experts.

Competency 6: Be able to help clients search for various types of counseling-related information via the Internet, including information about careers, employment opportunities, educational and training opportunities, financial assistance/scholarships, treatment procedures, and social and personal information.

The Internet could be described as the world's largest library, and the availability of psychology- and counseling-related bibliographies, abstracts, full-text journal articles, lectures, research projects, and funding sources is currently a "mouse click" away from one's desktop. Mental health organizations, associations, and individual professionals are creating Web sites every day, and access to authoritative information on specialized topics is current, convenient, and almost limitless (Jackson & Davidson, 1998). A distinctive feature of the Web is the breadth and depth of culturally rich information that one can instantaneously access from any Internet gateway around the globe. Rapidly changing data can be updated within minutes, allowing counselors to retrieve information that is highly current.

Once a person accesses the Web using a browser, he or she can find specific sites or home pages by using one or more of three methods (Sabella, 2000):

- Each site on the Web has its own unique, case-sensitive, electronic address called a Universal Resource Locator (URL) that points a computer to the Web page's location. Once known, a user can simply enter the URL into his or her Web browser and go directly to the intended site. Once at the site, a counselor can then place an electronic "bookmark" that will allow him or her to point and click on a description of the site without ever again having to recall the URL.
- A second method for finding information is to rely on the hypertext feature of the Web and "jump" from page to page using related links. Moving from one link to another is affectionately known as "surfing the Web." The advantage of surfing the Web is that it gives the user control over what sites are deemed valuable. The disadvantage is that such a search is less than systematic and can be very time consuming and costly in the form of on-line charges.
- Third, the counselor can consult an Internet portal such as Yahoo! (www.yahoo.com), which categorizes Web sites into various hierarchies of information and provides a search engine. A *search engine* is a computer program designed to surf the Web and index pages from available sites (Courtois, 1995). Much like electronic databases found in libraries, a search engine on the Web can find a page's location from various key words and search conditions. Using unique search terms and search conditions can narrow the results from thousands of possible sites to a more manageable number in a matter of seconds. One disadvantage of using a search engine, however, is that the vast number of Web pages are apt to contain various forms of any keyword. Additional examples of portals include www.excite.com, www.lycos.com, www.snap.com, www.alltheweb.com, www.hotbot.com, and www.av.com.

Competency 8: Be able to access and use counseling related CD-ROM databases.

By using CD-ROM technology locally (installing a CD-ROM on your desktop), through a local area network (LAN), or over the Internet, counselors can access a level of available information that is now at an all-time high and will continue to grow exponentially in the coming years. The current rapid change in technology and its impact are clearly represented in this single competency area. Between the adoption of these standards (Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, 1999) and the writing of this chapter, the line between desktop access, LAN, and Internet access has become quite blurred. In the recent past, many CD-ROM database programs of use to counselors, such as the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) and PsycLIT, were mounted on CD-ROM platforms with an interface known as silver-platter. Today, many individuals access these same materials over networks and are completely unaware of the technology that makes this possible. Thankfully, knowledge of the technology is not mandatory. However, because it is not easy to differentiate between technologies (and is largely unimportant), the remainder of this section focuses on the issue of accessing databases in general rather than CD-ROM-specific databases.

The first and mostly important information school counselors must be prepared to access are those databases that categorize professional literature. The two most common are the ERIC database and PsycINFO. The United States Department of Education maintains a system of Educational Research Information Centers (ERIC). The ERIC system maintains a database and copies of important research and information in the educational arena. Papers from professional meetings, book chapters, unpublished manuscripts, and some journals are all indexed. This database is now available on-line and can be found by pointing one's browser to www.accesseric.org. The ERIC system is also a good method for innovative counselors to disseminate information about their work. All school professionals can write papers or monographs about specific projects they are involved in and submit these materials to ERIC. They may then be added to the database and can be accessed by other school professionals. Two specific ERIC offices to consider are the ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation (www.ericae.net/main.htm) and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Student Services (www.uncg.edu/~ericcas2/).

PsycLIT has undergone various name changes over the years but remains a critical tool in a counselor's work. Originally called Psychological Abstracts, this data set was a large, annually updated set of books that were intricately coded and cross-referenced. In only a matter of hours, the professional school counselor could identify dozens of potentially useful articles on any topic in the field. Converted to a computer-based CD-ROM system known as PsycLIT, counselors with computer skills could accomplish the same literature search in minutes, by visiting a local university library. In its most recent form, known as PsycINFO, the entire database can be accessed over the Internet by members of the American Psychological Association or for a small fee by nonmembers. Most university libraries also provide access, and in many states, dial-up access to universities is provided for professional educators. PsycINFO is often the professional school counselor's first step to retrieve current data on any topic or area of professional concern.

While the above databases are among the oldest, they are not the only ones to consider. In some instances, newer services provide information and features not available on these traditional services. One example is EBSCOHost. This service abstracts and catalogs over 1,000 professional scholarly journals. Once identified, many of the materials in this database are available immediately in full-text format, allowing the user to scan the entire document to determine usefulness, and then print a copy for reading if desired. Additionally, many libraries, universities, publishers, and professional organizations are working to put large collections on-line. These series change daily, so a complete accounting is impossible. One example is provided by the ERIC/AE Full Text Internet Library project (www.ericae.net/ftlib.htm). From this Internet site, professional school counselors can access a wide range of materials related to assessment and evaluation in educational settings.

Other databases of potential interest to counselors includes the following:

- Education World's Counseling Community (www.education-world.com/counseling): This site contains many data sets, including Associations & Organizations; Directories & Indices; At-Risk Resources; Career & College Information; Burros Assessment Test Lists; K12 School Counseling Centers; Magazines & Journals; and Professional Development.
- The United States Library of Congress (www.loc.gov): The Library preserves a collection of more than 119 million items, more than two thirds of which are in media other than books.
- The Electric Library (www.elibrary.com): For a nominal fee, this site offers the full text of a vast database of newspapers, magazines, transcripts, maps, photos, and books. This site also offers a free tracker service that will search their database for new articles on a person's favorite topics and deliver the headlines to his or her e-mail address.
- The *Encyclopedia Britannica* (www.brittanica.com) on-line includes the complete encyclopedia, as well as *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* and the *Britannica Book of the Year*. Advanced search and navigation capabilities and the power of the Internet make the *Encyclopedia Britannica* an invaluable reference and research tool.
- The *Oxford English Dictionary* (www.oed.com): With more than 2.5 million quotations illustrating how words are used, this on-line dictionary is a unique source of information on the evolution of words and meanings, from the earliest times to the present day.
- The United States Department of Education Publications Web site (www.ed.gov/pubs/) publishes a wealth of information for teachers, administrators, policymakers, researchers, parents, students, and others with a stake in education. Included is a searchable bibliographic database of more than 20,000 publications produced or funded by the department since 1980.
- National Center for Research in Vocational Education (NCRVE; www.vocserve.berkeley.edu/fulltext.html) is the nation's largest center engaged in research, development, dissemination, and outreach in work-related education and is funded by the Office of Vocational and Adult Education of the U.S. Department of Education.
- Maintained by an individual, this Internet site (www.prairienet.org/~scruffy/f.htm) seeks to link to sites containing full-text state constitutions, statutes (called codes or compiled laws in some states), legislation (bills, amendments, and similar documents), and session laws (bills that have become laws).
- The ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation full-text Internet library (www.ericae.net/ftlib.htm) contains full-text books, reports, journal articles, newsletter articles, and papers on the Internet that address educational measurement, evaluation, and learning theory.

- A list of free (29 titles at the time of this writing) full-text journals on the Web (www.lesley.edu/faculty/kholmes/libguides/cpfulltext.html) is maintained by the Lesley College Library.
- The *Journal of Technology Education* (www.scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JTE/) provides a forum for scholarly discussion on topics relating to technology education.
- The *Journal of Technology in Counseling* (http://jtc.colstate.edu) publishes articles on all aspects of practice, theory, research, and professionalism related to the use of technology in counselor training and counseling practice.
- The *RECORD* (www.psychwatch.com) is an on-line journal and news periodical with articles published, written, and submitted by Psychwatch.com readers and Web site visitors whose credentials follow their articles.

Competency 9: Be knowledgeable of the legal and ethical codes that relate to counseling services via the Internet.

As a school counselor, when you think of conducting counseling with your students, you probably envision you and your client(s) in your office, in the classroom, or perhaps even on a "walk and talk." However, others may also have a mental image of a counselor who sits in front of the computer and conducts counseling over the Internet. Web counseling (also known as cybercounseling) is the attempt to provide counseling services in an Internet environment. The environment may include e-mail, chatrooms, or Internet videoconferencing. The practice of Web counseling began slowly, although it is rapidly finding popularity among both counselors and "cyberclients" (Bloom & Walz, 2000).

Among counseling professionals, Web counseling has created somewhat of a debate about the utility and effectiveness of this new medium. Moreover, those involved with traditional ethical and legal issues for counselors are wondering how such matters relate to the Internet environment (Sabella, 1999). In 1995, the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) Board of Directors appointed a Web counseling task force to examine the practice of on-line counseling and to assess the possible existence of any regulatory issues NBCC might need to address. The task force established a listserv composed of more than 20 individuals who had specific knowledge, expertise, skills, and opinions regarding the practice of Web counseling. Soon it became apparent that counseling had a diverse presence on the Internet, from Web sites that simply promoted a counselor's home or office practice to sites that provided information about counseling, and others that actually claimed to offer therapeutic interventions either as an adjunct to face-to-face counseling or as a stand-alone service. No one knew if the lack of visual input made a difference in the outcome of the counseling process. No one knew about the legality of counseling across state or national boundaries. No one knew if there was any relevant research in any field of communication that could shed light on these questions (Bloom, 1997). The relative newness of the use of the Internet for counseling service and product delivery leaves authors of standards at a loss when creating ethical practices on the Internet. However, through its work, the NBCC forged ahead and devised the Standards for the Ethical Practice of Web Counseling (available at www.nbcc.org/ethics/wcstandards.htm). Similarly, the International Society for Mental Health Online and the Psychiatric Society for Informatics officially endorsed in January 2000 the Suggested Principles for the Online Provision of Mental Health Services (available at www.ismho.org/suggestions.html). The American Counseling Association (ACA,

1999) approved and published the Ethical Standards for Internet On-line Counseling, which are designed to establish appropriate standards for the use of electronic communications over the Internet to provide on-line counseling services and, the organization states, should be used only in conjunction with the latest ACA Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. Cybercounseling standards address important and difficult issues, such as educating clients about counselor qualifications and training, confidentiality and security of information, storage of sensitive information, verification of client identity, availability of the Web counselor, working in the event of technological failure, procedures for client crises, how to communicate off-line, the limitations of counseling over the Internet, and more.

Competency 10: Be knowledgeable of the strengths and weaknesses of counseling services provided via the Internet.

The evolution of the Internet offers many future possibilities and potential problems in the delivery of counseling services. Although there exists some research efforts in the area of technology in counseling (e.g., see the *Journal of Technology in Counseling* at http://jtc.colstate.edu), professional counselors need to strive continually to identify the salient interpersonal processes unique to therapeutic relationships. The following is a beginning list of potential advantages and disadvantages of Web counseling according to individuals who have investigated, observed, or participated in it (Sabella, 1999).

Potential Advantages of Web Counseling

Delivery of counseling services: Walz (1996) noted that the information highway "allows counselors to overcome problems of distance and time to offer opportunities for networking and interacting not otherwise available" (p. 417). In addition, counseling over the Internet may be a useful medium for those with physical disabilities who may find even a short distance a significant obstacle. For yet others who are reticent in meeting with a counselor or self-disclosing, the Internet may prove to be an interactive lubricant that may very well foster the counseling process.

Delivery of information resources: The Internet is a convenient and quick way to deliver important information. In cybercounseling, information might be in the form of homework assignment between sessions or bibliocounseling. Also, electronic file transfer of client records, including intake data, case notes (Casey, Bloom, & Moan, 1994), assessment reports, and selected key audio and video recordings of client sessions, could be used as preparation for individual supervision, group supervision, case conferences, and research (Sampson, Kolodinsky, & Greeno, 1997).

Assessment and evaluation: Access to a wide variety of assessment, instructional, and information resources, in formats appropriate in a wide variety of ethnic, gender, and age contexts (Sampson, 1990; Sampson & Krumboltz, 1991), could be accomplished via the World Wide Web.

Communications: Especially via e-mail, counselors and clients can exchange messages throughout the counseling process. Messages may inform both counselor and client of pertinent changes or progress. E-mail can provide an excellent forum for answering simple questions, providing social support, or scheduling actual or virtual meeting times.

Marriage and family counseling: If face-to-face interaction is not possible on a regular basis, marriage counseling might be delivered via videoconferencing for cases in which each couple and the counselor (or counselors) are in different geographic locations. After independent use of multimedia-based computer-assisted instruction on communication skills, spouses could use videoconferencing to complete assigned homework (e.g., communication exercises; Sampson et al., 1997).

Supervision: Anecdotal evidence has shown that e-mail is an enhancing tool in the process of counselor supervision and consultation. It provides an immediate and ongoing channel of communication between and among as many people as chosen (Myrick & Sabella, 1995).

Potential Disadvantages of Web Counseling

Confidentiality: Although encryption and security methods have become highly sophisticated, unauthorized access to on-line communications remains a possibility without attention to security measures. Counselors who practice on the Internet must ethically and legally protect their clients, their profession, and themselves by using all known and reasonable security measures.

Computer competency: Both the counselor and client must be adequately computer literate for the computer/network environment to be a viable interactive medium. From typing skills to electronic data transfer, both the counselor and client must be able to effectively harness the power and function of both hardware and software. Similar to face-to-face counseling, counselors must not attempt to perform services outside the limitations of their competence.

Location-specific factors: A potential lack of appreciation on the part of geographically remote counselors of location-specific conditions, events, and cultural issues that affect clients may limit counselor credibility or lead to inappropriate counseling interventions. For example, a geographically remote counselor may be unaware of traumatic recent local events that are exacerbating a client's reaction to work and family stressors. It may also be possible that differences in local or regional cultural norms between the client's and counselor's community could lead a counselor to misinterpret the thoughts, feelings, or behavior of the client. Counselors need to prepare for counseling a client in a remote location by becoming familiar with recent local events and local cultural norms. If a counselor encounters an unanticipated reaction on the part of the client, the counselor needs to proceed slowly, clarifying the client's perceptions of his or her thoughts, feelings, and behavior (Sampson, et al., 1997).

Equity: Does the cost of Internet access introduce yet another obstacle for obtaining counseling? Does cybercounseling further alienate potential clients who might have the greatest need for counseling? Even when given access to the Internet, could a client competently engage in cybercounseling without possibly having ever had a computer experience? Web counseling seems to exacerbate equity issues already confronting live counseling.

Credentialing: How will certification and licensure laws apply to the Internet as state and national borders are crossed electronically? Will counselors be required to be credentialed in all states and countries where clients are located? Could cybercounseling actually be the impetus for a national credential recognized by all states? Will the profession as a whole need to move toward global credentialing? Who will monitor service complaints out-of-state or internationally?

High tech versus high touch: How can counselors foster the development of trusting, caring, and genuine working relationships in cyberspace? Until video transmission over the Web makes telecounseling a reality, cybercounseling relies on a process devoid of nonverbal or extraverbal behavior. Even if one is able to conduct real-time counseling over the Internet via video, can this medium help one to communicate so as to foster the counseling core conditions? Furthermore, Lago (1996) posed a key question: "Do the existing theories of psychotherapy continue to apply, or do we need a new theory of e-mail therapy?" (p. 289). He then took Rogers's (1957) work on the necessary and sufficient conditions for therapeutic change as his starting point and listed the following computer-mediated therapist competencies: the ability to establish contact, the ability to establish relationship, the ability to communicate accurately with minimal loss or distortion, the ability to demonstrate understanding and frame empathic responses, and the capacity and resources to provide appropriate and supportive information. This proposal begs the question as to whether such relationship conditions as outlined by Rogers can be successfully transmitted and received via contemporary computer-mediated telecommunications media.

Impersonation: A famous cartoon circulated over the Internet depicts a dog sitting in front of a computer. The caption says, "The nice thing about the Internet is that nobody knows you're a dog." Experienced Internet users can relate to the humor in this cartoon because they know that there are many people who hide behind the Internet's veil of anonymity to communicate messages they ordinarily would not communicate in real life—messages that convey unpopular sentiments and would ordinarily be met with castigation. Others rely on anonymity provided by the Internet to play out fantasies or practical jokes. Who is the cyberclient, really? Does the client depict himself or herself as an adult but is actually a minor? Has the client disguised his or her gender, race, or other personal distinctions that may threaten the validity or integrity of the counselor's efforts.

Ethics: How do current ethical statements for counselors apply or adapt to situations encountered on-line? For the most part, counselors can make the leap into cyberspace and use current ethical guidelines to conduct themselves in an ethical fashion. However, problems exist. The future will inevitably see a change in what it means to be ethical as counselors learn the exact nature of counseling on-line.

Competency 11: Be able to use the Internet for finding and using continuing education opportunities in counseling.

Continuing education is an important aspect of every professional's plan for life-long learning and competency maintenance. A great deal of knowledge, skills, and attitudes can be learned by means of traditional training, that is, by attending workshops and participating in ongoing university courses. How might counselors be informed of such opportunities with sufficient notice for coordinating them into their schedules and travel plans? The Internet is a viable tool that counselors can use for learning about highly specific types of advanced or ongoing training regarding special counseling issues, methods, or populations. One common method for learning about continuing education opportunities is to consult the on-line workshop and conference schedules of professional associations such as the American School Counselor Association at www.schoolcounselor.org or the ACA at www.counseling.org. Many universities now offer their course schedules on-line (e.g., for our own institution, go to www.fgcu.edu and click on Course Schedule) with links for applying as a nondegree seeking student and actually enrolling in specific courses. Or, a counselor might tap into the breadth of offerings among many organizations and companies by conducting an Internet search using the keyword phrase "continuing education and counseling" (see Competency 6). One Internet site, www.MeetingEvents.com, allows users to find relevant meetings, receive automated meeting updates, and even learn about discounts on travel.

Because participating in traditional continuing education can be quite expensive and sometimes inconvenient, many universities, professional associations, and private training companies have developed home study kits. These kits are shipped to the counselor and can then be completed without undue travel and financial costs. They usually contain study materials, workbooks, and audio/videotapes in addition to tests or evaluations which, upon timely completion, are returned to the provider for scoring and determination of credit. The NBCC, for one, keeps an updated and approved list of home study kit providers on-line at www.nbcc.org/docs/homestudy.htm. Other Home Study Programs include the ACA (www.counseling.org/homestudy/); Coaching, Counseling, and Mentoring Services, Inc (www.ccmsinc.net/); Anderson & Anderson Certification Programs Home Study Courses (www.andersonservices.com/certif.html); and Laban's Addiction Specific Training (www.last-homestudy.com/), to name a few. Counselors should, of course, check with their state licensure boards and certification renewal bodies to see if any particular home-study program is acceptable before purchasing.

The menu of continuing education opportunities offered "at a distance" is also growing quite rapidly. With distance learning, materials and other content are available on-line that a counselor can access remotely from any computer with Internet service, even from home. Distance education affords counselors the advantage of learning without the barriers of space, pace, and time, and their experience is typically facilitated by a rich medium that include study materials, streaming video, interactive lessons, chatrooms, e-mail correspondence, and electronic bulletin boards. Similar to learning about traditional ongoing training and home-study kits, counselors can become informed of distance learning opportunities by checking with counseling association Web sites (e.g., seminarnetwork.net/aca2000/) or conducting an Internet search. One way to evaluate the quality of on-line courses is to refer to the ACES Technology Interest Network (1999) Established Guidelines for Online Instruction in Counselor Education before registering. Once again, counselors are cautioned that while a vast majority of state licensure boards and certification renewal bodies accept on-line courses for continuing education credit toward credential renewal, some may not. To avoid disappointment in that regard, counselors should verify if their licensure board or certification body accepts these courses prior to registration.

Competency 12: Be able to evaluate the quality of Internet information.

One of the wonders of the Internet is that it provides an equal voice to anyone interested in publishing their ideas. As such, it has allowed an explosion of information to become available. Unfortunately, this ease of access comes at a price. The scientific community has historically relied on principles of "peer review" to ensure that research results, scientific opinion, and cutting-edge knowledge are accurate. The Internet provides a forum in which individuals no longer must subject their writing to the peer review process. The result is a lack of quality control. In the past, professionals seeking information on a new guidance curriculum, counseling technique, or parent involvement program would turn to professional literature. In today's world of quick publishing on the Internet, readers can no longer place their faith in others. Today, each individual must become a knowledgeable consumer of information.

A startling example of this lack of control comes from research conducted by McClung, Murray, and Heitlinger (1998). Trying to assess the quality of information available to parents, these researchers focused on information specifically related to diarrhea in children. This area was chosen because specific practice guidelines are available from the American Academy of Pediatrics (1996) to use as criteria for comparison. McClung et al. found that out of 60 identified documents addressing the topic, only 12 (20%) met the standards established by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Alarmingly, information provided by teaching centers, practitioners, and health departments all provided inaccurate or outdated information at a rate of 80% or greater. This research clearly demonstrates the amount of questionable data available from resources that appear to be reputable. A final caution from McClung et al. notes that even within a single university or health department, there may be two or more Web sites providing contradictory information.

Consumers of information in this new world must be prepared to determine the quality of information they find on the Internet. In many cases, Internet sites provide little information that can be used to judge quality. However, armed with the right questions, the informed consumer can differentiate between sites that are likely to contain current, reliable information and those sites likely to contain biased, outdated, or inaccurate information.

A number of authors (Benedicto, 1998; Freyd, 1997; Grassian, 1998) have identified basic criteria to consider when evaluating Web-based material. Kim, Eng, Deering, and Maxfield (1999) conducted research and reviewed 29 separate rating tools. From these, they were able to identify 12 common categories used to rate Web materials. The 12 categories below are based on this research.

1. *Content of site*: One way to judge content is to compare it with other material. If information at a Web site is similar to material found in journals, textbooks, or other authoritative publications, then the site is likely to be of some quality. If the material at a Web site contradicts information in other settings, the site may be biased, outdated, or inaccurate. A careful consumer will also consider the completeness of a Web site. Sites that provide a cursory overview of a topic or that fail to provide information about important aspects of a topic may be sites that are biased or not well considered. Finally, consider the overall writing quality of a site. Poor detail in site development may suggest poor detail in content development as well.

2. *Design and aesthetics*: Issues in this arena concern the layout of the Web site, the level of interactivity, and the use of media. These elements have a strong impact on the attitude of users or the ability of the user to remember information from the site. The use of audio, video, and animation, if not carefully developed, can detract from the overall quality of a site by focusing on unnecessary information or providing visual and aural distraction that detract from the overall experience.

3. *Disclosure of authors, sponsors, and developers*: In determining a Web site's purpose, one should consider who developed the site. As one example, sites developed by a psychiatrist may be more drug-friendly than sites developed by a mental health clinician. Sites sponsored by a pharmaceutical firm may have an even stronger bias.

These sites may provide very good information, but recognizing the potential for bias, the informed user will also look elsewhere for alternative information.

4. *Currency of information*: A well-developed and maintained Web site needs to be current. Most sites display a development date at the bottom of the main page.

5. *Authority of source*: Web sites developed and maintained by individuals connected to a major state university may be more likely to contain current and accurate information than a site developed by a group of high school students. Conversely, the latter site may contain important insight into the lives of high school students and should not be summarily dismissed.

6. *Links*: A page that links to other Web sites that are known to be of high-quality suggests that the Web site author is concerned about quality and has taken steps to connect only to other quality sites.

7. *Attribution and documentation*: Web sites that include full citations and provide complete references are likely to contain more carefully controlled and thought-through ideas than sites that contain no citations or incomplete references. An important note: Not all references are created equal. References should be as carefully considered as any other data. References to information provided in the popular press may indicate a different level of quality control than references from prestigious professional journals.

8. *Intended audience*: A Web site on attention deficit disorder designed for parents is likely to contain much different information from a site developed for school personnel or psychologists. Although both sites may be valid and contain accurate information, the site aimed at a professional audience likely will have more depth and may contain more current information.

9. *Contact addresses*: When a Web site fails to disclose the author's identity, affiliation, or contact information, the informed user would be wise to question why the information has been omitted.

10. *User support*: Web sites designed to provide information may have little or no support, whereas Web sites designed to help professionals develop specific interventions or use technology in counseling and guidance settings may provide considerable support. The important issue is that the site provides a level of support necessary to help the user accomplish the site's goals.

11. *Ease of use*: Web sites that are difficult to navigate often leave users frustrated or with partial information. On the other hand, a well-designed site is easy to navigate, and users can easily ensure that they have reviewed all relevant material the site has to offer.

12. *Accessibility and availability*: While not an issue of quality per se, accessibility and availability are issues of usefulness. If a Web site cannot be accessed without elaborate registration procedures or high user fees, then it may not be used. An unused site is the same as a useless site.

SUMMARY

Progressively powerful computers, sophisticated software, and expanding networks are rapidly changing traditional school counseling approaches and standards of performance. Although no one is truly certain if or when the exponential growth of technology will taper, it is well recognized that we are immersed in a new age of information, communication, and collaboration. For better or worse, computers are changing the ways in which counselors conduct their work, interact, and especially make decisions. Counseling professionals must adapt to new ways of interfacing with machines and the people who use them in a way that promotes the goals and objectives of their work (Sabella, 1999). According to McClure (1996), no aspect of society or economy can function effectively and compete without such tools. School counselors who decide to "opt out" of information technology will be working with students who perceive them to live in a world that no longer exists. Information and networking technologies are now essential tools for manipulating ideas and images and for communicating effectively with others—an important component of the school counselor's job.

If not for professional competency, then perhaps more personal reasons for becoming proficient in information technologies might make the case for counselor technological literacy. Within the next two decades, computer networks will have penetrated more deeply into society than any previous network, including telephone, radio, television, transportation, and electric power distribution networks. Soon every person will depend on the information infrastructure for delivery of routine services, such as banking and financial transactions, purchases of goods and services, entertainment, communications with friends, family, and businesses, as well as for vital services, such as government and medical services. As users come to depend on the Internet each and every day, and as billions of dollars are transacted using electronic commerce, the information infrastructure becomes more critical to each counselor's and the United States' well-being. A counseling profession literate in information technology will be critical for ensuring that it is prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities of the Information Age (President's Information Technology Advisory Committee, 1998). Therefore, be it by personal or professional necessity, the time is now for counselors to proactively explore contemporary methods to accomplish their work using computer, networking, and other relevant technologies.

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Chapter 22

THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELOR'S PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY

Pamelia E. Brott

THE PURPOSE OF THIS CHAPTER IS to assist elementary school counselors in selecting a basic collection of materials for their own professional library. The selection process will be based on a counselor's needs, interests, and funds. Establishing a professional library will require the school counselor to invest a certain amount of time (e.g., inventorying current resources, determining needs, reviewing new materials, collecting resources) and money (i.e., purchasing materials).

THE PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY

A variety of books, electronic materials, and journals related to one's professional needs should be included in the professional library (Wilson, 1996). In addition, the school counselor may want to consider including clippings from newspapers and popular magazines, audio- and videotapes, distance education opportunities, community resources, and crisis intervention procedures as part of her or his professional resources.

Professional books that focus on various general and specialized areas of counseling are considered the basic essentials on which to build the professional library. Electronic materials and resources available via the Internet should be "bookmarked" and referenced for easy access. Professional journals, many of which are a membership benefit from professional organizations (e.g., American Counseling Association, American School Counselor Association, National Career Development Association), should be included as primary resources on issues and techniques for professional counselors.

Clippings from newspapers and popular magazines can be kept in a vertical file and can be cataloged by topic, such as parenting skills, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, college search, and behavior management. Audio- and videotapes demonstrating counseling techniques (e.g., conflict management, individual counseling, specific counseling skills) may be used to review or learn techniques as well as to share with others. With the advent of distance education, school counselors have the opportunity to participate in courses, workshops, and seminars regardless of their geographic location. Checking with local school district offices, institutions of higher education, and surfing the Internet can provide leads to distance education opportunities. Community resources should be organized into ready-reference formats (e.g., card file, three-ring notebook, computer file). The name, address, phone number, contact person, and a brief description for agencies providing services, professional referral resources, summer programs, and after-school programs would be a part of one's community resources. Procedures for crisis intervention also should be organized as a ready reference with step-by-step procedures, whom to contact, personnel to involve, and follow-up activities clearly stated.

Elementary school counselors can use the works found in the professional library in a number of ways:

- to encourage self-renewal
- to review background information on specific topics
- to develop a plan for counseling services
- to provide counseling services
- to prepare for graduate school assignments and for professional development
- to present at conferences and workshops
- to engage in research

The value of the collection is directly related to one's use of the materials. Unless the materials in the professional collection are used, they are of little value. Therefore, carefully selecting the materials and monitoring the use of the materials will help in keeping the collection current and beneficial to the elementary school counselor. There are at least three factors that may affect the utilization of the resources: (a) a commitment to professional development by the school counselor, (b) a collection of materials that satisfies the professional needs of the school counselor, and (c) easy access.

A commitment to professional development may be externally emphasized by administrators, supervisors, and licensing boards based on continuing education requirements; however, the desire for professional growth must come from counselors themselves who recognize the importance of lifelong learning. Counselors can take responsibility for their own professional growth. The professional library can support professional growth by providing the necessary resources to plan, organize, and deliver counseling services as well as resources for self-renewal.

In building the professional library, school counselors should consider their personal interests and preferences during the review and selection process. A rich and varied collection of materials will encourage counselors to use existing materials as well as update the materials contained in the personal collection.

The materials should be easily accessed. Adequate bookshelves, vertical files, and Internet access from a computer will assure accessibility of a variety of print and electronic materials. Besides convenient access to the materials, a centralized location can reduce user frustration. The elementary school counselor may consider housing the professional library within the counselor's office. A book at home can be of little use when the counselor needs to review information at school.

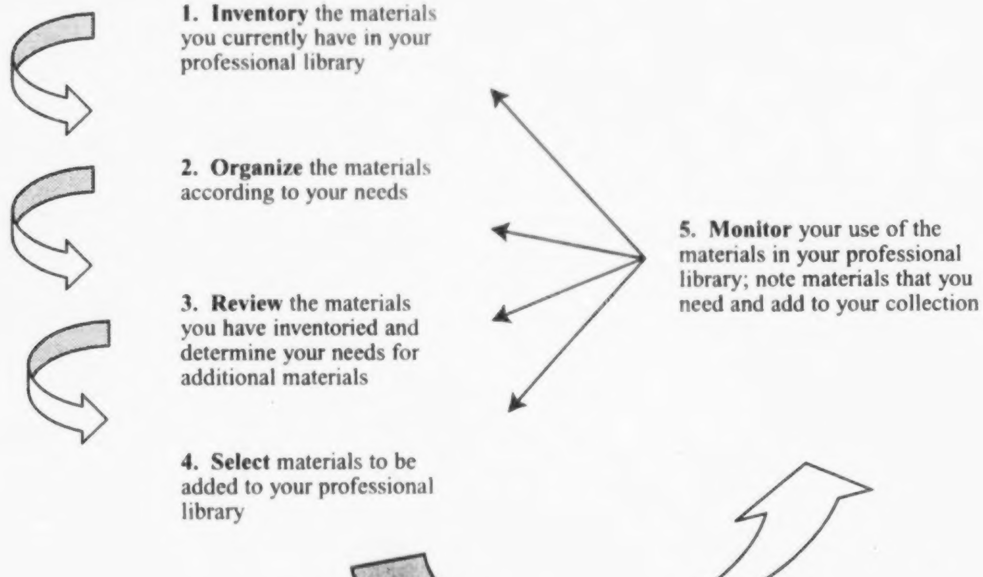
A PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING A PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY

A process to inventory, organize, review, select, and monitor the materials included in one's professional library should become a part of your role as a professional school counselor. This process contributes to your professional accountability. The first step is to *inventory* the materials that you currently have in your professional library. The second step is to *organize* the materials according to your needs (e.g., bookshelves, vertical files, computer files and bookmarks, notebooks, card files). The third step is to *review* the materials you have inventoried and organized to determine your needs for additional materials. The fourth step is to *select* materials to be added to your professional library. In the fifth step, you maintain the process as you *monitor* your use of the materials in your professional library and note the materials that you need so that they may be added to your collection. In monitoring the process, you will inventory, organize, review, and select materials as you maintain your professional collection. An overview of the process is presented in Figure 22.1.

MATERIALS FOR THE PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY

In a cursory review of the counseling literature, there were no aids identified that help school counselors choose materials for the professional library. Counselors may

Figure 22.1 A process for developing and maintaining a professional library.



1. **Inventory** the materials you currently have in your professional library

2. **Organize** the materials according to your needs

3. **Review** the materials you have inventoried and determine your needs for additional materials

4. **Select** materials to be added to your professional library

5. **Monitor** your use of the materials in your professional library; note materials that you need and add to your collection

rely on the recommendations of other counselors and counselor educators, reviews in professional journals, and samples provided by publishers to build the resources for their professional library.

In an effort to "fill the gap," this chapter includes an annotated bibliography of examples that can serve as a foundation for a professional collection of resources and that can be used to plan, implement, and evaluate the services provided by elementary school counselors. This is not an exhaustive bibliography because of the changing nature of available resources, but it can be viewed as a representative sample of resources for the elementary school counselor. The materials included are from both print and electronic media and are selected for their usefulness covering the areas of professional identity and developmental programming.

Professional Identity and Developmental Programming

The development of a professional school counselor identity serves as a frame of reference for carrying out one's role, making significant decisions, and developing as a professional (Brott & Myers, 1999). The professional library resources should encompass a range of materials that provide a frame of reference for the professional school counselor.

Developmental programming covers the areas of counseling, consulting, coordinating, and classroom guidance. These program areas focus on personal and social development, educational development, and career development. Resources for the professional library should cover program planning, service delivery, and program accountability and assessment.

Listed below are some books, associations, and journal publications that will provide an elementary school counselor a solid foundation on which to build a professional library.

Books

- Baker, S. B. (2000). *School counseling for the twenty-first century* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

The author presents his viewpoint regarding a balanced approach to school counseling, social action and legal ethical concerns, components of a balanced school counseling program, and professional identity.

- Corey, M. S., & Corey, G. (1998). *Becoming a helper* (3rd ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

The authors present topics dealing with becoming an effective helper and the personal difficulties in working with others, including stress and burnout, with suggestions for ways to stay alive and vital both as a person and as a professional.

- Metcalfe, L. (1995). *Counseling toward solutions: A practical solution-focused program for working with students, teachers, and parents.* West Nyack, NY: The Center for Applied Research in Education.

This book is a user-friendly spiral-bound resource for using a solution-focused program in the schools that includes ready-made handouts and materials.

- Morganette, R. S. (1995). *Skills and techniques for work with children and adolescents.* Champaign, IL: Research Press.

This book presents an overview to group counseling and the basic guidelines for group counseling activities that cover a range of elementary school counseling needs.

- Paisley, P. O., & Hubbard, G. (1994). *Developmental school counseling programs: From theory to practice.* Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

There are four parts to this book: developmental theory, sample developmental programs, sample lesson plans, and sample K–12 goals and competencies.

- Schmidt, J. J. (1991). *A survival guide for the elementary/middle school counselor.* West Nyack, NY: The Center for Applied Research in Education.

This book is a user-friendly spiral-bound guide for elementary/middle school counselors that provides ideas and materials, including reproducible forms for creating effective school counseling programs and choosing appropriate services.

- Schmidt, J. J. (1999). *Counseling in schools: Essential services and comprehensive programs* (3rd ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

The author traces the development of school counseling, presents the current roles and functions of school counselors, and explores the future possibilities for the profession.

- Thompson, C. L., & Rudolph, L. B. (2000). *Counseling children* (5th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

The book focuses on mental health service providers and is divided into three parts: introduction to counseling children, counseling theories and techniques, and special topics for counseling with children.

- Vernon, A. (1993). *Counseling children and adolescents.* Denver, CO: Love.

The book covers information about effective developmental counseling strategies for working with school-age children that includes individual, group, and family counseling; developmental counseling curriculum; and consulting with school personnel.

Associations

- American Counseling Association, 5999 Stevenson Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22304; http://www.counseling.org
- American School Counselor Association, 301 North Fairfax Street, Suite 310, Alexandria, VA 22314; http://www.schoolcounselor.org
- National Board of Certified Counselors, 3 Terrace Way, Suite D, Greensboro, NC 27403; http://www.nbcc.org

Journals

- *The Career Development Quarterly*: The official publication of the National Career Development Association.
- *Journal of Counseling & Development*: The official publication of the American Counseling Association.
- *NASSP Bulletin*: The official publication of the National Association of Secondary School Principals.
- *Principal*: The official publication of the National Association of Elementary School Principals.

- *Professional School Counseling*: The official publication of the American School Counselor Association. Previous titles of *The School Counselor* and *Elementary School Guidance and Counseling* were combined in 1997 to form the new publication.

Electronic Media

- ACAeNews available at http://www.counseling.org/enews

The electronic newsletter of the American Counseling Association. ACAeNews is available by subscription only. To subscribe, go to: http://www.counseling.org/enews/subscribe or send a message to listserv@peach.ease.lsoft.com with the following in the body of the message: subscribe acaenews (first name) (last name)

Example: subscribe acaenews janet smith

- ASCD Bulletin available at http://www.ascd.org/readingroom/bulletin/ebullet.html

The biweekly online newsletter of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. To subscribe to this newsletter, send an e-mail message to listserv@listserv.ascd.org (leave the subject line blank). Your message should say: "subscribe bulletin your name" (but don't use the quotation marks).

- CESNET available through http://listserv.kent.edu/archives/cesnet-l.html

A counselor's listserv—an electronically facilitated discussion forum for practicing counselors and counselor educators. To subscribe, go to the Internet site, click on "join or leave the list," and complete the form.

- National Guidelines for School Counseling Programs are available at http://www.schoolcounselor.org/national.htm
- Role statement from the American School Counselor Association available at http://www.schoolcounselor.org/role.htm
- Ethical Standards for School Counseling are available at http://www.schoolcounselor.org/ethics/standards.htm
- Links for school counselor resources are available at http://www.schoolcounselor.org/links/index.htm

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ISBN 1-55620-182-6
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